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EDITORIAL NOTICE.—The Editor cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. He must also decline to enter into correspondence with writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged. It is preferred that MSS. should be typewritten.

NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE country has, by now, grasped the fact that a certain section of the Press endeavoured to engineer a general election. The knowing winks of disgruntled politicians, in and out of Parliament, have been, also, recognised as evidence of the hopes of those who long for a chance to fish in troubled waters. But the general public does not approve of this attempt to throw industry and commerce into confusion, by the excitement of a general election, at a time when stable conditions and absence from political, economic and Labour wranglings are, above all, necessary. The business community have, at this moment, more than they can do to tackle their financial difficulties, bad trade and the miseries of unemployment. They do not intend to permit the Press to manufacture trouble and unrest, and especially not that group of newspapers whose editorial statements are discredited in the eyes of the general public by the personal quarrel between Lord Northcliffe and Mr. Lloyd George. The right to call for a general election lies with the country, and not with newspapers which do not reflect the opinion of the public or possess its confidence.

The House of Commons will be sorry if Mr. Sydney Arnold (Penistone) is compelled to resign his seat owing to illness. The House has always liked this modest little man who has for long been struggling with ill-health. As a stockbroker, he had the training which enabled him to set forth his views in favour of a Capital Levy in so lucid a manner that the House was able to see how unsound they were. His resignation would leave the Independent Liberals and Labourites with only two Members who have the faintest idea of economics or commercial finance—Mr. Stanley Holmes (Ind.-Lib.) and Mr. William Graham (Lab.). Mr. Holmes has not had much personal experience of the extremely difficult workings of trade except as an accountant dealing with figures—and one cannot learn to ride a race-horse by studying the bones of the skeleton of Eclipse. Mr. Graham is a journalist, and his knowledge of economics is equally unpractical: it is limited

to Honours in Economic Science in the University of Edinburgh. These two gentlemen, therefore, will not lend the country much help in financial discussions from the Opposition side; but, so far as their respective parties are concerned, in the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

If Mr. Pringle should be elected to Mr. Arnold's seat, some of the Wee Frees whom he inspires will find themselves less frequently coached. Mr. Pringle has imagination, but on several occasions has led Mr. Asquith, Mr. Hogge, and even Commander Kenworthy, into false positions. It is all very well to set marionettes a-dancing, but if the string-puller is unable to face his audience and see how it is taking the performance, he cannot change the step of the puppets quickly enough, when necessity arises. It will be rather fun, for a while, to have Mr. Pringle back into the House to let it see where the Wee Free brains are. The hill discovereth the daie. But Mr. Pringle has at times in the past become a bore; he must, in future, avoid that; there are already four universally acknowledged bores sitting near each other on the Opposition side.

What qualifications has Lord Lee of Fareham that he should be made First Lord of the Admiralty? That he chose for his title the name of Portsmouth's northern creek does not suffice. Gilbert & Sullivan took for the model of their imperishable First Lord the great W. H. Smith, sometime stationer and news-agent in the Strand, but that same stationer and news-agent proved himself possessed of solid ability, which Lord Lee has not yet shown. Through his wife he acquired great wealth, and he is rich enough to present Chequers as a permanent country home for our Prime Minister, but we doubt if he deserves promotion to a position calling for experience and ability of no mean order.

We are weary of commenting on the regular tale of outrage and murder in Ireland. Some advance, we suppose, has been made; the rebels have been isolated and Sinn Fein courts are no longer openly held; but strong measures in many quarters have utterly failed



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to quell the resistance of the insurgents. Now we notice that in Dublin all citizens will be required to be indoors by 9 o'clock instead of 10; and this aggravated restriction is the result of a bomb attack on Saturday on the Crown forces. In several of the County Cork areas town guards are being compulsorily enrolled from the population. Men at church in Queenstown were actually rounded up, taken to camp, and told they would be responsible on allotted days for reporting plans for ambushes or other outrages. What a life! What a situation! We do not know who is at present the leading spirit in Sinn Féin; but if it is still De Valera, it seems strange that his windy and cautious heroics should influence anybody.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain has announced the approaching removal of one of the most ill-conceived forms of taxation. It was but fair that the profits made by some at the expense of others, while the country was in special need of work and supplies, should be taxed to the hilt: none contested the equity of that. But to continue such an impost as the Excess Profits Duty, an actual tax on success, in time of peace—indeed, in time of reconstruction—was suicidal folly. Few taxes were more unjust, and few engendered so much dishonesty and laziness. Not many countries could have survived the combination of E.P.D. and payment by a percentage on cost: so as a nation, we may feel proud that we have survived with even a modicum of our commercial position. The lesson of it all is that industrial supremacy is the result of individual effort. Governments and hare-brained doctrinaires can find no substitute for that. Let them cease to look for it, and give individual enterprise the freedom and assistance it stands so much in need of.

The death-struggles of E.P.D. have, for some time past, caused injury to trade and perhaps to the Revenue; the Chancellor of the Exchequer must now see that his permanent officials advised him badly. He ought to have kept E.P.D. up in 1919, when he reduced it; and abolished it, six months ago, before it became a clog on trade expansion. This is the third instance, within two years, of Mr. Chamberlain being misled by his officials. They allowed him to look without disfavour upon what was soon shown to be a levy on capital, though called a tax on war-wealth. Events have proved the impossibility of putting such a tax into operation; an attempt to do so would have smashed our economic fabric. The mere flirting with this levy proposal, by Sir W. Pearce's Committee, caused mischief of the gravest kind and started the slump in trade. We are now suffering from some of the effects of allowing the levy proposal to receive the serious consideration of the Chancellor. The Treasury would do well to send some of its young men, occasionally, to study in the head offices of the great banks what is not taught at the Universities, practical finance. Sir John Anderson and Sir N. Hopkins have not proved themselves wise advisers; fortunately Sir John Anderson has recently left the Treasury; Sir N. Hopkins might, with advantage, be transferred to the insurance department of the Ministry of Health, or to the Office of Works. He is an expert statistician.

The following notice appeared in the *Times* of February 4th:—"Mincing Lane wholesale dealers welcomed the disclosures made in the *Times* with regard to cocoa, and claim that the article could be sold retail at a much lower price, still leaving a reasonable margin of profit." Is the Polypapist using the price of cocoa and chocolate as a weapon to "get even with" those cocoa manufacturers who are interested in newspapers competing with the Northcliffe Press? What is at the back of this cocoa price "stunt" in the *Times*? We do not accept it at its face value.

The Building Trade Unions have defied the Government. They will have no dilution; not even for a bribe will they help the men who have fought that they may leisurely lay their bricks in peace. The Government have their remedy. But will they seize the gauntlet

so insolently thrown in their faces? They have the men and they have the money; it is only courage that they lack. There is plenty of good clay to make bricks with in Lincoln and Norfolk; the huge war factories are more than sufficient to produce the necessary wood-work, while heating and water-supply are to be had or made almost for the asking. If the building trade unions will neither build houses themselves, nor allow anyone else to do so, it is the Government's obvious duty to the public to produce the housing required. This trade union tyranny must have an end. It is our boast that we are a free people: let us prove it now.

People of cleanly habits will not be surprised to learn that soap is too dear. According to the official report just published, the Lever Combine have been making too much profit on their products. It is very unwise of them to have done so, for a combine is only justified when it can produce cheaper than individuals in competition. Messrs. Coats of Paisley challenge anyone to make and sell thread as cheaply as they can, thus justifying their existence and their profits. But if Lord Leverhulme cannot give us soap at a fair price, his position as master of a combine is in jeopardy. The industrial and commercial combines so rapidly accumulating in this country are undesirable on moral grounds. If they cannot be justified on economic grounds, they should be abolished.

There is one point in this report of peculiar interest to manufacturers who are called upon to justify their charges. It first arose in the Coats enquiry, when raw cotton was charged at what was termed "replacement cost." The firm charged, not the price paid for the cotton, but the price at which it could be replaced at the date of sale. The soap combine have done the same. The reasoning is logical, but, when we come to falling markets, the principle is abandoned. Thus, if the price drops 50 per cent., the drop is ignored, and the cost price used as a basis for charging the manufactured products. This is "Heads I win, tails you lose," and the consumer does not get the benefit of the favourable market terms, while paying for those which are unfavourable.

A case of profiteering was tried at the Mansion House the other day, when a City merchant was fined for making 14 per cent. gross profit on a transaction in soda crystals. It was held by the Court that the profit was excessive, it being pointed out that the buyer never handled or stored the goods, acting merely as middleman, thus incurring no establishment or other costs. It was further pointed out against him that he had sold before he bought. Objecting, as we do, to unnecessary charges on transmission of goods from producer to consumer, we cannot see that there was much justification for such a conviction, so long as speculative trade exists. Supposing the man could not buy to fulfil his bargain except at a loss, would there then have been any complaint? Yet he took that chance. Again, the ultimate buyer was not in a position to purchase soda crystals as favourably as this man was; otherwise he would have done so. Middlemen live by their skill and daring in buying and selling, and while rising markets favoured their transactions, present day operations are fraught with inordinate risk. In many directions the middleman's profit can be eliminated, but in our own modern system of commerce he has established himself, and he could not have done so without a need for his presence.

Edinburgh has risen against the Government's costly inflictions and means to combat them, as does the whole of thrifty Scotland. Government wages are set so high, she contends, that private employers cannot compete. Men are even leaving their normal occupation in order to register as unemployed. It "fair scunners" them, this lavish largesse. Scottish farmers can get more from their land than most, but even they do not object to selling out, with the future so uncertain. Nor are the workers more contented with their lot. With the price of food at twelve and six a bottle, as they say,

they are a disgruntled people. They do not understand it, and it is evident the authorities do not understand them.

It is characteristic of our latter-day press that the death of Parnell's widow should resuscitate the romance of the great politician under the title of "Kitty O'Shea." Of Kathleen Parnell we have heard no mention. Men and women may dispute the place of Parnell in the history of Ireland and of the British Empire, but none will deny the cold, proud man some measure of respect and sympathy in the struggle he made to save his cause and the woman he had compromised. The full force of Rome, and his countrymen's fanatical hatred of anything English, proved too much even for so keen a swordsman as Charles Stuart Parnell. Deserted by the Ireland for which he had done so much, he found compensation in the woman who had kindled so fierce and unexpected a flame in his heart. And as all the world loves a lover, the romance of Parnell's life may remain, when his career as a great national leader has been dimmed.

Last week the *Globe*, well over a hundred years old, ceased to exist as a separate publication, being merged in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Although it cannot be said that its last two proprietors, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Clarence Hatrey did much to help it, the disappearance of this old-established paper is a sign of the times. For all practical purposes it has disappeared, for the *Pall Mall* only purchased the copyright, doubtless to prevent any one else doing so. This is a coup for the Government press gang, for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, although nominally bought by Lord Inverforth's son, is one of the rapidly growing group of Government publications. The *Globe* was never a great paper, but it was readable and sound. Its "turnovers" have been written by many a journalist of standing, and some of them were of considerable merit. The paper's last hope was Mr. Donald, long of the *Chronicle*, who contemplated a strong evening paper and purchased the property for that purpose. The scheme collapsed, however, and when Mr. Lyon sold the *Outlook* to Lord Lee of Fareham, he purchased the *Globe*, but failed to complete the bargain, the property falling into the hands of Mr. Clarence Hatrey, then a busy company promoter. And so the end came.

This week another event of more importance for lovers of literature occurs—the last independent issue of the *Athenæum*. Next week it will be incorporated in the *Nation*. That weekly maintains a good standard in art and letters; but it is regrettable that the chief exponent of literary criticism for a long range of years should not be able to continue an independent existence. A famous French scholar once said of the *Athenæum* that it was "sometimes cross, but, if it did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it." The present age may not see the necessity; how can one recreate the established prestige which lent authority to judgments, and courage to combat commercialism?

We regret to notice the death of Charles Edward Jerningham, one of the most accomplished pens who have gossiped about the town and the clubs. For many years he wrote in *Truth*, and was distinguished from the majority of his fellow-scribes by the care he took about his writing. He was a real social historian, and kept clear of sloppy scandal. He remained essentially a gentleman, which many gentlemen have not learnt to be when they take a pen in hand. And he had the scholarship of the antiquary, especially concerning London. This made him an interesting talker who could be vivid about the past as well as the present. Some of his best stories went into 'Piccadilly to Pall Mall' (1908). His imitators were many and markedly inferior. To-day the parasitic business of social and personal journalism flourishes, of course; but any twaddle is good enough for the latest photography and the subservient editor. But the notoriety of great ladies and prominent gentlemen who make a buzz for a season has a much smaller range than is

supposed. Recently we heard on the popular stage where the songs of the nation are made two elaborate references to Mrs. Asquith and her book. They were received without a sign of amusement or recognition.

It is asserted at Vienna that from 2,500 to 3,000 officers and men who fought in the Austrian army are still detained at Palermo, Monte Puccino, Cavareno, and other Italian convict settlements, doing forced labour in marble-quarries and sulphur-mines under the crack of the whip of their taskmasters. Of course, during the war, both in Italy and elsewhere, severe discipline had to be maintained. Even in British concentration-camps one heard of men being punished for what would have been considered harmless jokes elsewhere. When it came to insults or aggravated assaults, no allowance could be made for the nervous tension of exiles in confinement.

Sentences of 15 or 20 years were not infrequent, and that meant, especially in Italy, complete obliteration of a prisoner's identity. His name was forgotten; he lost all means of communicating with the outer world; he may even have remained ignorant of the conclusion of peace. It is therefore quite possible that ex-enemy soldiers remain forgotten. And the conditions of convict life in Italy are by no means enviable. One hears of rotten wood flooring, holes in the walls instead of windows, foul straw to sleep on, little or no sanitary accommodation, and floggings at the slightest provocation. There may be no truth in the story, but an investigation would allay the qualms of humanitarians.

The Army Council have issued an order that on and after April 1st, all officers in the Regular Army "must wear swords in accordance with pre-war regulations." Everybody knows that swords are of no practical use nowadays, difficult to wear gracefully, and a nuisance to clean. Also they are expensive to buy, but the Army Council would not think of that. The War has been above all things an orgy of free spending, the tradition of which still persists. While it lasted, it was not always easy to distinguish an "officer and a gentleman" from people of worse breeding and no manners. Now the sword will be a clear mark of the officer.

Lord Haldane is reported to have said this week to a young man who is appealing to the House of Lords for a new trial in an action for damages, "Every two minutes you spend on the case costs the public a guinea, in addition to which you are holding up other suitors." The young man has, it appears, talked for several days; but he is still far behind several professional records. When we think of what K.C.'s have done recently in the way of lucrative verbosity, and without protest, we cannot blame an amateur for taking up the time of the Court.

We recently received for review a publication called *Sea Pie*. This, we understand, was published during the war for the benefit of marine charities. It appears now to have been continued as an annual publication, presumably with the same object. It is published under the patronage of distinguished admirals and ship-owners, and as the contributors are thanked for their services, we assume that in later issues, as in the original, these have not been paid for. Yet we learn from a meeting of creditors of one George William Macey, that he held an interest in *Sea Pie*. *Sea Pie* is published by Messrs. Keliher and Company, and as the debtor in question was formerly employed by that Company, some explanation appears to be necessary, for the artists and others who contributed to the work, and the advertisers who lent their support, had no idea that private profit was being made out of the publication. Those who have to earn their livelihood in a competitive market have been very tolerant, even generous, regarding these publications, for one can readily appreciate that the nature of the appeal places such books in a highly favourable position. But, if private profit is being made from them, publishers and distributors will take a very different view.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PROFIT AND LOSS.

TO the student of human nature a company prospectus may prove more profitable than to the credulous investor, who sees in it only another easy road to riches. One wonders why men and women, intelligent in their own spheres of activity, subscribe hard-earned savings on the strength of specious promises which lack, for the most part, the substance which leads to performance. The cause is greed. Thousands of more or less unscrupulous men derive much profit by playing upon this well-known frailty in the composition of our natures, and company promoters will continue the game so long as they are permitted to exploit this weakness of humanity as they do.

A perusal of the latest prospectus issued discloses profits for less than three years, years of unparalleled extravagance on the part of the public; yet it is boasted that the concern has been established over three generations. Moreover, the vendor values his stock, and subscribers must accept his valuation. In vulgar language, this is a "pig in a poke," nevertheless it is considered good enough for the investing public. Again, there is a crisis in the jute industry, yet only a few weeks ago a combination of jute manufacturing firms was offered to the public, and although the price of jute bags tumbled in an unprecedented manner while the prospectus was actually in the papers, it is estimated that over 70 per cent. of the money asked for was subscribed. Here again, war-time harvests were cited as a bait.

If such transactions merely meant a manufacturer selling his business to the public at a price which his personal conduct of it justified, the outlook would be sufficiently speculative, but there is our middleman or promoter to be reckoned with. His is the lion's share. The modern company promoter first buys the business, paying to the owner a price only tempting enough to effect a deal, and then he proceeds to write his prospectus and speak in glowing terms of the future, naming a price to the public which must stagger the original vendor. During the past twelve months this inflation of capital has rendered it almost impossible for the shareholders to get either dividend or security for their money. It is quite legitimate to buy cheaply, and to sell as high as you can; but it is questionable if it is either legitimate or honest to do so by the methods adopted in company promotions.

The public should remember that anything worth keeping seldom goes a-begging, and that no company promoter offers shares in a business to the public without assuring to himself a profit on the transaction which is out of all proportion to the value of his services. They might also keep in mind the fact that, when they have invested their money in these over-capitalised concerns, they cease to receive the consideration they deserve. A small but well organised minority can manipulate the finances of a joint-stock Company almost with impunity. Thus many a company, which now calmly passes its dividend, may and does hand fat emoluments to its directors and their friends. If the business makes sufficient profit, shareholders may receive a dividend. If, as is too often the case, profits are not made, the shareholders alone are the sufferers. In spite of this, the public continue to be entrapped, like the foolish people who waste their substance on the backing of a race-horse, evidently unconscious of the large profits cleared on every race by bookmakers, and who go on hoping that their operations will one day be successful. A man who will hesitate to invest £500 in machinery or premises for his own business, of which he has full knowledge and experience, will hand that sum to a stockbroker to invest in some wildcat scheme of which he knows nothing, and wherein he is entirely at the mercy of those who live by his weakness or greed. He hopes to make money without working for it, and he is a fool. There is no doubt that he will continue to be robbed. Greed is a besetting sin deeply engrained in human nature. This being so, would it not be wise to protect the foolish investor from himself? There would be justification for so doing, for not only does he harm himself and deplete his own resources, but he promotes idleness in others, and handicaps the legiti-

mate progress of trade throughout the country. As Knut Hamsun says in 'Growth of the Soil': "They're mad, diseased; they don't work, they know nothing of the plough, only the dice." The more he subscribes to the wiles of the unscrupulous Company promoter, the less he has to invest in his own business or occupation, and the less he is able to invest in legitimate concerns which may want backing. This is a matter of some importance at the present time, for many sound and promising businesses may be in need of money, and in a position to pay good return for it. Such concerns should have every facility for inviting public assistance, but it is only by the elimination and control of faked flotations that they can be protected. It should not be possible for a man to take the public's money without offering some guarantee of his *bona fides*. It is all very well to say, "If the public are fool enough to throw their money away, let them do so." Legislation has been devised for the protection of fools in other directions, and it might well be extended into this particular sphere, where folly is so rampant. The greed of gain will remain with us, but it should be less in evidence, if we are prohibited from exploiting it. As soon as it gets into the minds of ignorant people that they can live by the work of others, there will be a diminution of effort which will seriously affect the national moral and enterprise. Let us facilitate the lending of money by those who have saved it to those who can use it properly; but let us stop by every means in our power the exploitation by unscrupulous men of those who seek a road to riches other than the only legitimate one of work.

THE LONDON OF YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY.

TWO or three learned books of late have brought before us the London of the past. Now a capital little study of London history*, especially of recent years, has set us thinking about the London of the present, its claims to recognition, and the temper of its citizens. London in the eighteenth century was gay and distinguished, and keener, we think, in politics than the city of to-day. The reputation of being much frequented by merchants and the traffick of trade goes back to the 'Annals' of Tacitus and the time of Boadicea; and to-day it looks as if London might degenerate into a series of business-houses and hotels, neither of them suggesting the charm of a place people are unwilling to leave. Since the eighteenth century London has been roundly abused, as a "great wen," a "stony-hearted stepmother," a "tyrant, bleary-eyed blunderer," a "forcing-house," and a centre of "unutterable external hideousness." The truth is that London has not of late years taken the place as a pioneer which might be expected from the greatest of cities. It rhymes too often with "undone," which is a bad rhyme. It collects most of the clever people of the world; yet it has not yet got a proper site or buildings for its university; it has muddled and mismanaged such essential things as the supply of water and light; it has not been able to maintain a repertory theatre in which art counts above commercialism; and its representatives in Parliament play no conspicuous part in public life. The City of London, which is famous enough to drop its territorial addition, has a fine record in history. It has settled the fate of English kings by refusing to bow to their will. Its independence is, or was, so notorious that it escaped the reforming zeal of the Victorians, and to-day, "alone among the municipal corporations of the kingdom, it retains its old form and most of its old privileges." But has the City a corporate and effective voice in affairs, as it had in the past? If it thought the Excess Profits Duty a ruinous and impossible tax, why did it not say clearly, "We won't have it, and, if you force it on us, you shan't have any of our money"? Mr. Mullins declares that "the Lord Mayor represents not only the City, but London, and very often the whole of the British people." This is an overstatement of the Lord Mayor's initiative and effectiveness in recent years.

We fear that London is growing slack in business, compared with the big towns of the North. It takes

*London's Story. By Claud Mullins. Bell. 2s. 6d. net.

too much leisure. It has begun living on its reputation, and hastening the arrival of the traveller from New Zealand who is going to stand on a broken arch of London Bridge and sketch the ruins of St. Paul's. The citizens of London show, for the most part, a weary indifference, not only to its history and traditions, but also to the local elections which settle their burden of rates and taxes. London, as a whole, goes to bed earlier than it used to; but it has become slacker about getting up. In a busy London thoroughfare we have found a chemist's shop still closed at nine in the morning, and have been rebuked at a large inn when we wanted breakfast before that hour. We meet commonly citizens who do not know where the Tower is, and do not want to see it. London is tolerated by an increasing number of its inhabitants. It evokes no local pride; it does not insist that it must have a thing because Manchester has got it.

This mood of indifference and apathy means decay—a decline like that which has overcome the City churches. Perhaps the abundant romance and history of London are not put before young Londoners as clearly and attractively as they might be. The subject is complicated, and needs some disentangling. We think teachers should be grateful to Mr. Mullins for his small book. It is clearly and brightly written, a lucid account of the gradual changes and reforms which have given London its advantages in the way of help and service to-day. "Advantages," we say, because the Cockney is more inclined to grumble over what he has not got than to realise how much he has gained, compared with his forefathers.

Writing on the Great Plague, Mr. Mullins says, "Probably London was quite as healthy as the majority of towns; very likely it was ahead of most." There are no early bills of mortality to settle the point; but, going back to the days when dirt was not supposed to be dangerous, we should have thought the site of London decidedly unhealthy, owing to the extent of the Thames and its tributaries. Looking from a good height such as the top of the Monument, one can see clearly that London inhabits low-lying ground with hills all round. It was largely built on a marsh, and has gradually gained solid ground from it. Battersea was an island; Victoria Station was built on piles driven through the mud; and Westminster itself was an island of brambles, as its earlier name shows. The lost rivers of London, such as the Fleet, are now underground. The picture of mediæval London by William Morris at the beginning of 'The Earthly Paradise' as "small, and white, and clean" is idealised. Cleanliness as an effective aid to health is a much later notion. By the time of Elizabeth there were regulations for sanitation, but they were not properly observed. In the London of John Gay the streets were hideously dirty, and drainage has led to the form of government London has to-day. Mr. Mullins points out the "curious, but perfectly true, fact that the uniting of Outer London has always been due to the problem of sewers," and that "the origin of our existing London County Council was the necessity for a new drainage authority."

London, like England, has a way of muddling on, until things get beyond bearing and must be changed. The Houses of Parliament face the Thames; that fact brought the foulness of its waters to the noses of M.P.'s in 1847, and probably saved the town from a devastating epidemic. Sailors took stores of the Thames as drinking water for years: in these days we wonder how they survived! The Port of London, represented by a large building now picturesque with scaffolding, is one of the most satisfactory of London's energies. For the other side, a story of muddle, waste, and lack of foresight, the reader need only examine the record of electric lighting.

The ordinary man is apt to think that the chief purpose of the L.C.C. is to reduce citizens to their L.C.M.; but Mr. Mullins points out what enterprise it has shown in taking on difficult duties in its 30 years of existence. The public owes to it a large addition of parks and open grounds, amounting to double what the old Board of Works provided. As a new broom the L.C.C. may

have been too vigorous and too profuse in spending money; but it has done a good deal for London. Its admirable surveys show a keen sense of London history. It has searched out and marked for all to see the houses where famous men and women have lived.

Mr. Mullins hints at a larger book which, we hope, he will accomplish. His present survey is capitally illustrated by reproductions from pictures in the Royal Exchange (which are much better as anecdote than art), and from the London Museum, a late acquisition which should do something to wake up Londoners to the romance of their great city. Finally we notice a good list of the books by which a student may profit. We are glad to see Leigh Hunt included, for the average citizen is not attracted by severe historians; he knows their style and their wearisome command of detail. We should add to the list one of the most learned and vivacious of Londoners, Charles Dickens. He has left us, for instance, more than one vivid picture of the varied delights and disadvantages of Covent Garden.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS A LA MODE.

THOSE who keep an eye on the semi-subterranean world where charlatans prey upon fools have recently reported a characteristic change of fashion. Table-rapping has become suburban, reputable ghosts have gone to Birmingham University, or to the antipodes with Sir A. Conan Doyle, and astrologists and crystal-gazers have discovered a sad falling off in fees. Trances and spirit-photographs are no longer the mode; the far-seeing occultist has abandoned the necromantic arts, and now poses as a psycho-analyst. For a guinea or so he will interpret our dreams—and the dream and the business are in his eyes as one.

The new line bids fair to beat the old in popularity. When the Spiritualists discovered that the next world was very much like this, they signed their own death-warrant; if Paradise is going to be like Putney, one may as well get used to Putney. But psycho-analysis has a double string to its bow. It professes to dissect the soul, and it wallows in sex; and a large number of people take to the mixture as to a new liqueur. Its chief ingredient, which is sex, tickles the palate, and the faint aroma of soul in the background sanctifies the smell.

It is a little hard on two distinguished men, Freud and Jung, that they should have been put to such base uses. Psycho-analysis in their conception rests on a sound basis—on the theory of the repression and retention in the mind of unconscious memories, still capable of influencing the consciousness years afterwards; and it was discovered that the hidden idea often manifests itself in the form of a dream. A correct interpretation of the dream may therefore give the skilled mental physician the precise clue for which he is seeking in some obscure mental disturbance.

So far, so good. The conception has proved of extraordinary value in experienced and sympathetic hands, and it is regularly used, with great success. But both Freud and Jung also declared that all repressed ideas, which are the foundation of dreams, are invariably of a sexual character, and a large interpretative literature has grown up on the subject.

Much of it has passed through our hands. Some of it is really illuminating. A great deal is obviously exaggerated special pleading. Much of it is absurd, and perhaps more is nauseating. Some of it is enough to make any healthy man or woman sick. Several of the authors had no interest whatever in psycho-analysis, but a great interest in pruriency; and the pretended garment of science does not in the least conceal their real interest in beastliness.

While these erotic developments were going on, it was noteworthy that the original theory was altered. It is perfectly true that sex plays a great part in life. But in the normal sane life there are many other interests, and English psychologists from the first revolted from the Freud-Jung conception that every dream has a sexual basis, as a theory that was demonstrably false, and indeed absurd. When a man happens to dream about a conversation with his broker or

his banker, for example, it is ludicrous to pretend that some suppressed sexual emotion is the cause of his nightmare. It may be lobster, or it may be Excess Profits; it is certainly not sex.

These considerations, which after all are merely common-sense, would seem to have appealed to the originators of psycho-analysis. Freud admits that other than sexual instincts exist, but says that only the sexual instinct has been explored. Jung recognises that sex is not everything, and substitutes vital impulse—which is pretty safe, seeing that it must necessarily include sex and everything else. Brill, another leader of the school, interprets dreams as an unconscious manifestation of a "desire for power," which is probably nearer the mark than either of his colleagues have yet reached. But it is becoming evident that no single formula will cover the whole interpretation of dreams. There are dreams which are in no sense either sexual, or manifestations of a desire for power—dreams which are the recollection of past years, for instance. A man of fifty will dream that he is a schoolboy being thrashed by the head; another man of the same age, who holds a perfectly safe position in the world, wakes up sweating, because he has dreamed once again that he is a junior clerk on a pound a week, sacked without notice for some office delinquency. These things are merely remembered terrors which have made a deep impression on the personality.

These modifications of the new doctrine, and especially that of Brill, bring psycho-analysis into line with current psychological thought. Its exponents have added a new weapon to our armoury of the mind, but like most innovators, they have imagined that it is the only weapon in the arsenal. Purged of that error by criticism and experience, psycho-analysis will take its proper place in medical practice and psychological study, and add to our knowledge of the personality.

But at present it is not purged. There lies before us the record of the thoughts of a young girl*; its interest—as the publishers recognise by restricting its sale to members of the educational, medical, and legal professions only—is purely pathological. The child whom it depicts appears to be physically precocious, but mentally rather backward; she can hardly be taken as a quite normal case of development. Yet the book is prefaced by Professor Freud with the remark that "This diary is a gem. Never before, I believe, has anything been written enabling us to see so clearly into the soul of a young girl during the years of puberal development." As a matter of fact, the diary throws none but a negative light on the girl's soul; it is practically nothing but a record of her physical awakening, which is often insipid, frequently absurd, and occasionally beastly. And we are afraid that, until psycho-analysis gets past these rather elementary conceptions or misconceptions of its function, it will not attain its proper rank among the sciences.

SOME INDEPENDENT ARTISTS.

THE modern movement in art has been accompanied by a great deal of noisy journalism and declamatory extravagance, and the advertising methods of the travelling circus have been used to make the public aware that something is going on. These preliminaries, comparable to the circus parade with brass bands and gaudy processional chariots, have been received with the usual degree of boredom, amusement, ill temper and high spirits, according to the spectator's constitution, and are now dispensed with. We may settle down to see the show, and the "legitimate" artists may be distinguished from the acrobats with whom they have been in danger of being confused. We no longer have to face distracting phenomena such as the 'Mud Bath' of Mr. Bomberg, which picture, being too large for the gallery where he exhibited, was hung outside in the street, and deepened our depression on rainy days; or the dynamic manifestations of Signor Marinetti, whose propaganda resounded like galvanised iron in the days before the war.

The painters and sculptors now exhibiting at the Independent Gallery in Grafton Street include, with one

*A Young Girl's Diary. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.

or two notable exceptions, the chief exponents of modernity in England. Certain ingredients which have risen in the seething-pots of various groups have been carefully skimmed off, and the resulting combination of savours is less pungent and more satisfying to the conventionally educated palate than might be expected by those who have not closely followed the artistic developments of the last few years. There is nothing in the gallery that is intentionally provocative. The atmosphere is one of serious effort, and an illustrated pamphlet may be bought which explains very clearly and modestly exactly what it is that the artists are trying to do. In these surroundings, if anywhere, the inquiring amateur who is still dubious about the whole business of "movements" and "groups" may find satisfaction. Several of the artists are of unquestionable distinction. A good example of Mr. Walter Sickert's work does not look in the least out of place; and the inevitably growing recognition of Mr. Duncan Grant's rare qualities (we are pleased to note that one of his pictures is now in the Tate Gallery) will be still further increased by this well-organised exhibition. A common interest in design unites all the artists, and leads them, as often as not, to the solution of problems which the incompetent or unimaginative would shirk altogether. Picture-making too often falls into formula, and every period has its hackneyed systems of composition, from which the creative designer escapes. The pyramidal arrangement and the mechanical foreground *repoussoir* are familiar instances of methods which became as lifeless as the drapery and truncated column of the old-fashioned photographer. A real creative impulse will disregard a system, or use it and give new life to it at will. There is the case of Turner, who was too obvious and servile in many of his pictorial arrangements, but could dignify a convention or break entirely with tradition and habit, when under the influence of realities clearly seen and intensely appreciated. His 'Frosty Morning,' with its central focus and broad lines diverging thence to each side of the picture, is revolutionary, and completely justifies itself. Similar happy deviations from precedent are to be found at the Independent Gallery. In Mr. Duncan Grant's 'Snow Scene,' which is presented with the freshness and spontaneity of Matisse, the strong vertical line of a sash-bar bisects the picture without destroying its unity. The pamphlet we have referred to reproduces an interior by Mr. Roger Fry, in which the concentric lines of the composition should, according to precept, direct our attention to an unimportant object in the centre of a table; but this weakness is avoided, and the design is closely bound together as the artist intended. It is true that other unexpected arrangements are not equally successful. Mr. Elliott Seabrooke has not managed to unite the two halves of his picture, 'Houses at Buckhurst Hill,' though he has used ingenious artifices to conceal the fact that we are really looking at two pictures in one frame. Apart from this defect he has, like Mr. Adeney, made distinct advances towards a true classic use of form and colour in landscape. Among the other painters of landscape, Miss Anne Estelle Rice is the least interested in solidity and depth, being content with easy decorative rhythms. Mr. Anrep disappointed us. In spite of his intelligence and talent, he revolves without progress, hesitating between various tendencies and inclining to pastiche. In two drawings by him the possible advantages of Picasso's influence are neutralised by the cultivation of accidental qualities, and by a curious wilful weakness. The line constructs nothing, and affects a naïveté Mr. Anrep does not possess. The mosaic which he exhibits, though unimportant as a conception, strengthens our opinion that he is practically the only artist working in this medium who has a feeling for the proper handling of the substance employed. It is strange that he should be so isolated. Other artists, such as Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Kauffer, Mr. Roberts, or Mr. Dobson, might create expressive designs in mosaic without being uncomfortably restricted by its limitations. Technically it has fewer difficulties than stone-carving or stained glass, and any perspicacious student who has seen the mosaics of Rome or Ravenna, or for that matter Mr. Anrep's

own, may grasp the broad difference between the old craft and the mistaken dexterity of modern Italian workmen. Mosaic should recommend itself to architects and others who are interested in the decoration of interior and exterior walls and floors.

The gallery of Messrs. Paterson and Carfax contains a collection of Mr. Ethelbert White's work. Mr. White is another modern artist who is preoccupied with design. Landscape is his principal motive, and water colour the medium which he controls most often with success. He is evidently conscious of a certain thinness in his oil-paintings, the usual consequence of a long preliminary study of water-colour, and he is trying to introduce greater fullness and volume in his last pictures. Maturity will no doubt extend his powers. He is capable of an intimate feeling for nature and has a strong decorative sense, but the two do not always combine in his production. He has translated the decorative aspect of his work in some excellent woodcuts.

GORGONZOLA.

SIR HENRY LAYARD had a short way with omniscient youths, who gushed over Cimabue, Giotto, Daniele da Volterra. "Do you seriously think," he would ask with his rasping drawl, "that any of them can compare with Mortadella da Bologna?" Some would fall into the trap and discourse on the chiaroscuro of that great artist; others, more honest, would invite scorn by confessing ignorance of his work. It was only when they reached home that they discovered that "mortadella" was a sausage.

Gorgonzola, were it not so well known, might serve a similar mischief, suggesting either a French super-novelist or a Rabelaisian character. Why so peculiarly nauseous a cheese should enjoy world-wide fame is a mystery, but the fact remains that for one person who knows Coulommiers, or has tasted the fromage de Monsieur de Fromage, a million barbarians swear by gorgonzola. Yet how many of them could place on the map the eponymous village?

It lies seventeen miles from Milan. A rickety little steam-tram will take you thither, by no means a joy-ride, for the three ragged cars are packed with unsavoury, strap-hanging peasants. Luckily the windows are mostly broken, or the fastidious would stifle. The cars sway from side to side and seem to stumble as they crawl, while the engine, following and exaggerating the example of every tram in Italy, emits heart-rending screams, capable of piercing the most hardened ear-drum, either to call attention to its sufferings, or to save rare pedestrians from being run, nay, crawled over. The tram does very bad business, and its Belgian owners vainly strive to induce the canny municipality of Milan to take it over.

Probably no other township of the same size and miserable aspect enjoys anything like the world-wide renown of Gorgonzola. Presumably educated people may never have heard of Teschen, or Mohács, or Kosovo, but Gorgonzola is a household word. Yet the mitey capital offers no evidence to justify its international fame. It is just a remote Italian village, and a shabby one at that. In many ways it resembles its cheese, for it looks and smells unappetising. Such as smack their lips over gorgonzola should avoid visiting Gorgonzola, except that, if they relish such a cheese, they will relish anything. The few streets are swamped with a black slough of mud which flows over the tram-lines without making an appreciable difference to the sluggish progress of the cars. The children of Gorgonzola wait about all day long for the pleasure of welcoming them with loud cries, which the engine seems to appreciate, bulging its two big red eyes over the morass, and responding to the acclamations with ear-splitting horns. There is a dark, viscous canal where the children paddle in warm weather. Much dirty linen, publicly washed in its soupy waters, hangs from the windows of the houses, which, with their green lichens and fungus-growths are not unlike the local cheese.

There is something inexplicably funny about the

solemn natives, and visitors are moved to merriment by portentous posters on the walls—high-sounding appeals to "The People of Gorgonzola," bidding them vote red or white, march in the van of progress, or stand by King and country, and ever the recurrent, high refrain, "Gorgonzola! Gorgonzola!" There is something comic-operatical about it all, like a pantomime proclamation of the liberties of Sausage-and-Mash or "Votes for Eggs and Bacon!"

Travel teaches us that Russia leather never came from Russia, Dresden china from Dresden, or Kidderminster carpets from Kidderminster; so there need be no surprise over the discovery that no cheese is made at Gorgonzola. To find its famous factories you must remount your tram and proceed to Villa dei Fornaci, the next village, and there you will find but three modest establishments, scarcely sufficient to warrant all the notoriety. Either the progress of civilisation has educated palates to condemn gorgonzola, or else the world's supplies are of transpentine origin. On the tram you meet a merchant, who says that few people know how to eat gorgonzola. There must be no half-measures. Let it be either very old and crumbling, or quite new and soft. Nor may it be eaten alone. To spread it on bread is sheer vandalism. Finally, as though imparting a cabinet secret, the merchant whispers in your ear, "Take the advice of a friend and expert: eat it as old as you can." After all, it is a sound general rule that "the old is better."

Green, grimy houses, which, unlike the cheese, do not improve with age; a tired tram wading through a sea of slush, with muddy children racing it victoriously: such are the chief impressions of Gorgonzola.

CORRESPONDENCE

REPARATIONS.

SIR,—It seems to me you are quite right about Germany and reparation.

Speaking from memory I think if you look up Bismarck's address to the Reichstag in 1878, you will find he said that Germany at that time was near bankruptcy, while France was more prosperous than it had ever been. France had had to pay only £200,000,000.

F. C. C.

SIR,—In your issue of the 5th inst., you ask, "Wasn't it Bismarck who invented the formulae 'Bleeding them white,' and 'Leaving them nothing but their eyes to weep with'?"

Well, it wasn't Bismarck who invented the second formula, but an American, General Sheridan. It was advice tendered by him to the Germans in 1870 as to the way they should treat the French, which advice, in fact, the Germans did not follow. Bismarck was the inventor of the first formula. He prophesied that, if the French ever succeeded in defeating Germany, they would "bleed it to the white," i.e., as slaughtered calves are bled. It seems likely that, if the French got their way, his prophecy would come true.

J. A. STRAHAN.

OFFICIAL REPRISALS?

SIR,—I am so glad to hear that Mr. Montagu Bain knows a Russian. That is very nice for him. I, too, know a Russian. I also know that twice two makes four, and that, if a herring and a half cost three-half-pence (alas! a remote possibility to-day), the price of two would be (approximately) twopence. It may also interest him to hear that I once knew an Englishman with unbiassed views on Ireland. But that was many years ago.

Mr. Bain is really very entertaining. He should be encouraged to write his autobiography. For with such varied experiences the story of his life would surely be delightful.

Mr. Bain knows a Russian. Does he, perchance, know a good joke when he hears one? Or has he lost his sense of humour in his search for the irrelevant?

IRISHMAN.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

SIR,—I did not intend to suggest that my political views were of any importance; nor—to be candid, did I attach much importance to the patriotic or political dejection of "A Voter." With regard to his criticism of my English, I can only say, "A hit, a very palpable hit!" I have never troubled myself much about the eccentricities of the English language, because I find that I can make myself understood without their aid, besides providing other people with some innocent enjoyment in exposing my gaucheries. If I have thereby succeeded in raising the spirits of "A Voter," no one can be better pleased than

ONE WHO GAVE UP VOTING LONG AGO.

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AND SINN FEIN.

SIR,—Quite apart from any consideration of the Irish Question, there is one statement in Mr. Armstrong's letter in your issue of January 29th that would not suggest in him "that spirit of detachment and breadth of vision," the absence of which he deplores in Mr. Arnold.

He "would point out that the rule of priests has not always been entirely bad: priests led the Spaniard of the Middle Ages to victory in his long crusade against the Moor." Certainly their rule has not been *always*, nor *entirely* bad—nor for that matter has the rule of Eastern potentates, or cannibal chiefs; but to place to their credit the destruction of Arabic civilization in Spain would seem to be very doubtful praise.

Of course, they led the "long Crusade": the priest has always been a leader in the struggle against freedom of thought.

While all Europe was sunk in the depths of superstition and ignorance and held fast in the trammels of a deadening and hopeless theocracy, the Arabs in Spain enjoyed the utmost toleration, and, by their scientific outlook and encouragement of a healthy scepticism, were pouring a steady light of learning and culture into the darkness of Europe, and laying the foundations of the Renaissance, that was to make possible the modern world. Of course, the priests "led the Spaniard"—their very existence depended on choking the source of this flood of rational thought that threatened rapidly to undermine their absolute power in Europe.

And subsequently they celebrated the triumph of their "long crusade" by instituting their "Holy (save the mark!) Inquisition," and utterly exterminating two flourishing and virile civilisations in Mexico and Peru with the most terrible cruelties.

Even their own God, with his propensity for smiting his enemies—as frequently reported in the Old Testament—must have been mildly shocked by the atrocities of his faithful Spaniards and their spiritual fathers in the silver mines of the New World.

CLIFFORD L. PLATT.

"JURYWOMEN."

SIR,—Even granting the contentions raised in your article on Jurywomen, we find it difficult to believe that the ultimate influence of professional women will not be beneficial to society.

At any rate, we look to them to purge it of the prostration of its intellect before a perpetual banter, as worthless as it is immodest.

T. F. BISHOP.

BREUGHEL.

SIR,—Verily the English are a nation of sheep, following their bell-wethers of the press, who themselves are only sheep of a larger mould.

See them flocking to the National Gallery, armed with their magnifying glasses, to examine the Breughel 'Adoration' and swell the chorus of praise. Really, there is something exquisitely ludicrous in the idea of submitting the picture to the judgment of the many-headed.

But "here stand I," to assert that it is a slovenly piece of work (you have only to look at the inconsequent jumble of folds in the shadow of the Virgin's robe), and the beginning of that attempt to cover the

space with as little trouble as possible.

Besides, it is sordid in conception, poor in colour, poor in detail and execution; it lacks co-ordination in the parts and harmony in the whole.

Turning now to the matchless perfection of the Mabuse, miraculous in execution, I could not go back to the Breughel. While we have the Mabuse, we require no other 'Adoration' to adore.

For my part I would not give twopence towards purchasing the Breughel; but if you must have it, and no doubt you will, let it be as a link in the historical chain, in which can be discerned the beginning of the degradation of Art; leading to the vile ineptitude of El Greco, Tiepolo, and that modern painter of the slapdash school, the content of whose pictures is usually bare backs and bananas.

SILVESTER SPARROW.

RAILWAY COLLISIONS AND SINGLE LINES.

SIR,—The recent railway smash with a loss of seventeen lives between Abermule and Newtown was a shocking affair. Col. Pringle described it, I notice, as "a plain tale of human failure." For my own part, I would never take on the duties of a signalman or train director, and would get put into prison, if necessary, to avoid them. But could not the possibility of fatal error be considerably reduced? What strikes me as extraordinary is that in these advanced days a single line should be used on the Cambrian system both for an express and a local train going in opposite directions.

Unless the physical conformation of the country makes two lines difficult, surely they should be laid down as a matter of course. There are scraps of single line on great railways which are mere survivals of earlier days, and ought to have disappeared long ago.

I do not know who is responsible for the examination of railway lines and plans—the Board of Trade, or the new and grandiose Ministry of Transport. But I hope that some official inspector, who may be unbiased alike by the claims of Labour and the cries of shareholders, takes the standpoint of public safety, and sees that our railways are as clear of danger as they can be. In Ireland, of course, human life counts for nothing to-day; but in this country we have not yet reached that height of savagery.

TRAVELLER.

WOMEN'S DRESS AND THE PRESS.

SIR,—The article on 'Women's Dress and the Press,' in your issue of the 22nd inst., is curiously illustrative, at once of women's reckless devotion to fashion, and the part men take in stimulating that brainless idolatry. The chiefs of great newspapers shrewdly exploiting the cupidity of tradesmen to enlarge their advertisements; the proprietors of vast emporiums responding, week in, week out, by columns of insidious appeals; the cunning men-milliners that meet in solemn conclave to invent new designs based upon wicked extravagance; the periodic sales that are written up to the verge of exercising hypnotic attraction—what a concentrated formidable influence is thus brought to bear on untrained minds, already too keenly responsive to the temptations of the "exclusive model"! The workaday world of men and women go on their strenuous way, largely unconscious of such temptations and artifices. Yet they have a significance of their own in woman's history.

That history in the past is packed with anomalies that subvert the logic of rational existence, and have made her evolution one of envelopment rather than development. Woman's subordination to frivolity was established in a world whose highest ideal for her was to minister to man's pleasure, to deck her person with the splendour of an eastern idol, and fill her days with empty shows and amusement. When she lacked the prestige of wealth or position, the world connived at conditions that yoked her to sex as an ox to the plough. In the things that minister to vain-glory and the baser passions, she was all-powerful; in the weighty matters of nationality, a shadow in the background. She, the

high-priestess of life, who risked her own in giving sons to the world, has never by right of motherhood been given a yea or nay in the councils that doomed them to fields of carnage. The government of Europe by the male half of the human race has all but swamped our civilization. Recovery and readjustment must needs be a slow and painful process, involving changes that are at present hidden or dimly realized. Among them may we not look for the scrapping of business methods that are fruitful in perpetuating a semi-degraded phase of woman's life?

C. E. M. M.

Geneva.

ENGLISH AND GERMAN LENSES.

SIR,—Our attention has been drawn to a reference in the SATURDAY REVIEW for 22nd January, to the position of the optical industry in this country in comparison with that of Germany.

The suggestion is made that a Zeiss lens which has been recently imported, although more expensive than an English-made lens, has been purchased because of its superior quality. We entirely agree with your writer that unless the optical industry in this country can produce lenses and instruments at least equal in quality to those made abroad, it does not merit Government support, but we think it is a pity that your readers should be led to suppose that Zeiss lenses are the best in all branches of optical work.

We should be interested to know what particular lens was referred to in your paper, but as specialists in the manufacture of photographic lenses, we produced during the war, what is now known as the Cooke-Avian Lens, which was the first British lens to successfully compete against the best German lens in use for aerial photography.

Referring to this achievement, Mr. John H. Gear, F.R.P.S., when President of the Royal Photographic Society in 1916, made the following statement in his opening address about the comparative test that was made:—

"I may say that plates were exposed simultaneously at an altitude of several thousand feet with the Zeiss, and the new T.T. & H. Lens, of equal foci, the latter now known as the 'Avian': the plates received identical exposures and development. I subsequently was asked to give an opinion upon the quality of the lenses used in making the negatives, not knowing what lenses had been used. Very little examination was necessary before I unhesitatingly selected one negative as being superior to the other—that one was made with the British lens. The Leicester firm deserves the congratulation of British photographers, and the public, for having removed the stigma from British science and manufacture that English lenses were inferior to German, especially at a time when there are war difficulties, and shortage of suitable optical glass."

We think this unbiased opinion is worth the consideration of your readers, and we should greatly appreciate it, if you would bring it before their notice.

TAYLOR, TAYLOR & HOBSON.

WM. B. APPLETON

(Director).

62, Oxford Street, W.

'THREE MINUTES.'

SIR,—My apology for troubling you with a letter is that I was much interested in the article 'Flashes of Silence.' I did not see the performance of Arthur Cecil referred to, although I saw him act in other plays; but I can confirm the writer of the article as to Lady Monckton's performance. Mrs. Bernard Beere also played the wife in 'Jim the Penman.' If my memory does not play me false—I am an old man—the latter actress did not realise her husband's crime until she had brought her chair close to the fire, and as the act drop came down, the audience could see from her expression that what she feared was true. That was her "Three minutes."

I also confirm the writer as to George Honey. I can see him now, sitting at the table, carefully sweeping it for the tobacco dust. This was a wonderful performance. J. W. Ray was a fine Eccles; so was Richard Young in the provinces, until ill-judged applause led him to overdo the part to an extent that was painful to all lovers of good acting.

W. A. HARLE.

QUESTIONS FOR PROHIBITIONISTS.

SIR,—How do prohibitionists explain the fact that Christ, on one occasion, performed the miracle of turning water into wine? If all use of alcoholic beverages be so entirely harmful as they contend, it is inconceivable that He should have been ignorant of the fact, and it would be incredible that He should have used His miraculous power for such a purpose.

Again, the Koran absolutely forbids the use of alcoholic beverages, and the rule has generally been strictly observed by the followers of "the Prophet." The Mohammedans have thus enjoyed the benefits of prohibition for many centuries, and yet they are, almost everywhere, among the least progressive of races, with very little aptitude for the higher forms of civilisation. It would be interesting to hear how prohibitionists explain these facts.

We are all, of course, agreed that the *excessive* use of alcoholic liquors is most injurious, both physically and morally, but that is not inconsistent with the view that, taken in *real moderation*, they are not only harmless, but even, to some extent, beneficial, and therefore their total prohibition is an unjustifiable interference with individual liberty. Why not impose restrictions on the consumption of spirits and strong wines, while refraining from all interference with the use of beer and the lighter wines? It is the consumption of spirits that does most of the evil.

ANTI-PROHIBITION.

LIDDELL AND SCOTT.

SIR,—It is good news indeed that the famous *Lexicon* is to be reissued with revisions. Those "harmless drudges" who annotate dictionaries will now come in usefully. What is the humour of which your note of last week speaks? I seem to remember that Liddell and Scott once included the explanation of the middle voice of the verb "to wash" in the following words, "I wash myself, but this is rare." Also there was a gibe as to the derivation of "sycophant" from swindling in figs, which was declared to be a "figment"; but in the latest issue before me this is changed to a "mere invention"—by Liddell, probably, in the revision he made alone after Scott's death. Liddell was a glorious creature to look at, I believe; also the father of Lewis Carroll's Alice; but I do not know that he ranked very high as a Greek scholar. You proclaim your form of the epigram on him and his coadjutor as the correct one. The form familiar to me for many years seems more subtle, and less clumsy in rhythm; but that may only mean that it is an improvement on the original. Here at any rate it is:—

"Two men wrote a *Lexicon*—Liddell and Scott;

The one was learned, the other was not.

O come now, ye Muses, and read me this riddle:

How much did Scott write, and how much did Liddell?"

If the various parts contain on the back a clear indication of the letters they include, publication in that form will be an advantage, as the *Lexicon* is a weighty affair to balance in one's hands, or drag out of a shelf. I always used to tremble when my tutor—an admirable scholar, singularly short-sighted, and of slender build—used to hold up the huge book within an inch of his nose. I feared that the investigation of my claims to Atticism might lead to the loss of his balance; and frankly my Greek was never worth that.

The parts of the *Lexicon* will, I presume, not be much taller than the bound volume is at present, not so tall, at any rate, as those of the 'New English Dictionary,' which have an intolerable procerity for the ordinary

shelf. They will not go into the revolving bookcase where I keep my most valued books of reference, though, being a legacy from a famous bookman, it is one of the biggest I have ever seen.

CANTAB.

MAULE ON DIVORCE.

SIR,—I was much interested to notice that in your review of the Life of the late Lord Gorell (p. 94) you speak of Maule's famous address as "misquoted," and now available in a contemporary report discovered by Mr. de Montmorency. Are there any material alterations from the following words, so printed in that interesting selection of all sorts of good things, Mr. J. T. Hackett's 'My commonplace Book'? I quote only the more ironical part of Maule's address to the convicted bigamist, who was deserted by his wife, and married again. "You should have gone to the ecclesiastical court and there obtained against your wife a decree *a mensa et thoro*. You should then have brought an action in the courts of common law and recovered, as no doubt you would have recovered, damages against your wife's paramour. Armed with these decrees, you should have approached the legislature and obtained an Act of Parliament which would have rendered you free and legally competent to marry the person whom you have taken on yourself to marry with no such sanction. It is quite true that these proceedings would have cost you many hundreds of pounds, whereas you probably have not as many pence. But the law knows no distinction between rich and poor. The sentence of the court upon you, therefore, is that you be imprisoned for one day, which period has already been exceeded, as you have been in custody since the commencement of the assizes."

LEX.

THE RETURN OF A COMET.

SIR,—We are told that the comet Pons-Winnecke will come into collision with the earth on June 26th. I should like to make the following suggestions with regard to the return of this comet to perihelion.

Comets are bodies which revolve round the sun, and are attracted by it and by the planets. Some slight conception of their enormous dimensions may be gathered from the fact that a comet which appeared over a century ago had a tail of 120 million miles in length, and 15 million miles in diameter at its widest part, and the diameter of its nucleus was about 127,000 miles, or more than 15 times the diameter of the earth. This is a direct proof that the substance comprising a comet must be inconceivably rare.

Again, had the tail of the comet which appeared in 1843, consisted of the lightest substance known, hydrogen gas, its mass would have exceeded that of the sun, and every planet would have been dragged from its course.

The extreme tenuity of a comet's mass is also proved by an examination of the tail, which, as the comet approaches the sun, is thrown out sometimes to a distance of 90 million miles within the space of a few hours; and, the most remarkable feature of all that is, that the tail is at complete variance with the laws of gravity. It appears that this repulsive force is electrical. As an instance of this, a comet which approaches the sun with a tail behind it, will, after passing perihelion, recede with its tail in front of it, in spite of the fact that this tail may be long enough to reach 200 million miles. Then we find that in the course of a few hours, this tail has been absorbed and another one started, after leaving its perihelion. From the above remarks, it is impossible for us to consider ourselves justified in anticipating an excessive meteoric display during the contact of the earth with the approaching comet.

HENRY J. NASH.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE LAND.

SIR,—You have explained more than once—and I think the point is sound—that a certain proportion of the unemployed are unemployable. These would not

stick to any trade, even if they were capable of doing more than take money for working.

There is, however, one occupation which might absorb some at least of those who lack (want?) work, to the great advantage (1) of the country; (2) of the health of the workers themselves. That occupation is agriculture. One of the greatest handicaps of this country, as was discovered by sad experience during the submarine campaign against us, is that it is not self-supporting from the point of view of food. An idiotic Government Commission before the war decided that there was no danger of this country going short of food. Now the people of England, and the Government which still pretends to do the best it can for them, have had their lesson.

It is quite likely that the people understand it better than the Government. The latter urged all able-bodied citizens who could not fight to raise potatoes and other crops. They were raised with wonderful success in view of the short time for learning the job. And then the Government broke their promises, and turned the allotment holders out of their allotments.

A sensible course to attempt now would be to lure the unemployed to the cultivation of corn, other cereals, and potatoes. There is good land, lying unused, and good work to be done, which is also healthy work for those employed. Of course, some solid inducement will be necessary to get ex-soldiers into the fields, where picture-palaces and public-houses are not numerous, also to get these same gentry accepted and taught by people who know that agriculture is an art. But, if the Government can afford to supply a little *douceur* of a quarter of million of money to one of the slackest of the trade unions, which is a by-word for its fantastic discriminations of work any one of average intelligence can do, why should it not, more profitably, encourage the farmers? These last ought, as they do in America, to band together, and let the Government know that they are able to sit up and take notice, also to vote. Then, perhaps, they would get a little more attention.

One hopeful sign is that the Premier is not taking so many of his usual holiday jaunts abroad to settle the affairs of Europe. Now that he has realised the seriousness of affairs in these islands, things may begin to improve. It is a little late, it is true; but we must be grateful in 1921 for small mercies, having discovered in 1920 that big ones were merely a rumour.

COUNTRYMAN.

WASTE OF GAS.

SIR,—I have observed five gas flares flaming on the front of the Hippodrome in broad daylight. In a busy street, just opposite one of the most frequented of tube stations, this waste of gas is seen by thousands daily. That it adds much to the already sufficiently advertised attractions of the Hippodrome I cannot believe. But it is certainly an object-lesson in the wild extravagance permitted without protest in places of entertainment. Gas has gone up; gas is expensive, and has to be economised by those who need it for cooking, and for professional work in reading and writing. But a place of amusement can afford to burn it away when it is not in the least needed. What a comment on the universal cant about economy! Why does not the L.C.C. restrict such useless and harmful waste? I do not know what power it has to interfere, but municipal authorities might at least tax such gratuitous waste of light out of existence.

DISGUSTED.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY.

SIR,—The Underground is always complaining and explaining that it is frightfully hard up. But I notice that it supports bright artists who give us funny posters about crowding, or solemn thoughts (unacknowledged) from Marcus Aurelius. And the other day a glance at a fine new carriage brought to my eyes a placard on it, "This car cost £7,500." How pleasant to be able to do these things without money! It almost reminds me of Government finance.

M. H.

REVIEWS

AN UNDISCIPLINED ART.

The Art of the Novelist. By Henry Burrowes Lathrop. Harrap. 7s. 6d. net.

HISTORIANS who have chronicled the development of our social life during the last hundred years have taken little or no account of the curious, almost dramatic, suddenness with which in the year 1830 works of prose fiction, hitherto thinly scattered over the country year by year from the printing presses of Edinburgh and London, began to pour over the land in a thick, regular stream that in recent years has become an uncontrollable torrent. Masson estimated that in 1820 there were about twenty-five novels published in England, a number that for some years previously had varied but slightly. But the amazing year 1830 witnessed the birth of no fewer than a hundred and one works of prose fiction. For nearly thirty years the annual total remained almost constant, but in 1870 it reached two hundred, in 1874 four hundred, and in 1913 one thousand and fourteen. No one has yet troubled to investigate what special circumstance, or combination of circumstances, made 1830 so notable a year as regards the quantity, if not the quality, of its fiction. Sir Walter Scott has been casually blamed or praised, according to the point of view of the individual writer, for unwittingly revealing this new means of obtaining comparative wealth; but 'Waverley' was published in 1814, and sixteen years elapsed before any appreciable increase in the number of published novels can be observed. Professor Lathrop points out that the causes of the second great increase in the yearly product of British prose fiction—an increase dating from 1870—"are associated with the general progress of industrial democracy: cheapened processes of mechanical reproduction, the diffusion of an elementary education, the increased leisure of hand workers and small merchants, diminished seriousness." That is to say, he explains the popular demand for fiction, and no doubt the demand has been one of the chief factors in creating the supply; but he makes no attempt to discover and disclose the multitudinous causes that for many years have conspired, and still conspire, to raise the general level of fiction higher and higher, until we find to-day that it has reached a condition of comparative excellence that is a continual source of astonishment to serious students of contemporary literature. That, at least, is how it strikes a contemporary. Of so free and changing an art many views are possible. What is in effect the struggle between the classic and romantic ideals may make great differences of opinion. The older man has not the same point of view as the younger; and both should have a hearing.

We are well aware that glib pulpsters and hasty journalists cry out upon all modern fiction for what they term its shallowness, its illiteracy, and its essential insincerity. No doubt many novels are insincere, illiterate and shallow; but so are many epics, more theological works, and still more books devoted to politics and sociology. The development of an art can be appreciated and estimated only by an examination of the best examples of that art; the fiction of the last twenty years provides these examples in almost startling profusion. It has been argued that we have to-day no writer of fiction who can favourably be compared with the giants who worked in the middle decades of the last century, but history abounds in examples of the vain practice of praising the past at the expense of the present. The glamour of tradition, of death, of a vanished epoch, hangs over the names of Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë; for two generations critical opinion and the world's approval have buttressed their reputations; they have conquered time. But Mr. Joseph Conrad has the misfortune to be still alive and working; the generous amplitude and wonderful architecture of Mr. Arnold Bennett's 'Old Wives' Tale,' are obscured by the theatrical trivialities of his serial stories, whilst Thackeray's wild oats—witness 'The Yellowplush Papers' and 'The Adventures of Philip'—have long

since been reaped and burned by time; 'The New Machiavelli' of Mr. Wells suffers in repute from our inability to judge it impartially, because of our hostility to the great body of that writer's political and sociological thought. But this pastime of comparing the greatness of living novelists with that of the Victorians is necessarily futile; the question can be decided finally only a hundred years hence: it will, indeed, decide itself. Meanwhile, there can be no dispute that some even of our second-rate living novelists, in the matter of technique, are much superior to the writers of the last two generations. Each year at least a score of novels are issued that, as regards structure, fall only just short of perfection; they are well and firmly built; there is a nice adjustment of the subsidiary to the main plot; the minor incident is so devised and distributed that, instead of clogging the action, it develops it; the dialogue is life-like; the narrative is energetic, and the descriptive passages are never burdened with tedious philosophic disquisitions.

But technique in works of fiction has until recently been regarded as of little consequence, for it is recognized that as yet the novel, as such, is formless, or, at all events, may assume almost any shape with impunity. Even Professor Lathrop, who writes with thoroughness and an enviable intuition, never really grapples with the problem of form from the constructive point of view. Novelists appear to have assumed that because life itself is shapeless, and because their art is the one that most minutely describes the complicated machinery of life, their work is made the more effective and "truer," the less it is controlled by the æsthetic laws lying implicit in that work's nature. No novel yet written has been "complete and harmonious as a whole and vivid and definite in all its parts, having the variety, the energy, the unity, the movement of a living organism." The great Victorians were great in spite of their incongruities, the lack of unity in their work, their slapdash arrangement of incident, and their blurred outlines.

Professor Lathrop, it is true, throughout his book lays stress on craftsmanship, but his method of doing so is philosophical rather than practical. He declares that the writer of fiction "can hardly be hopeful of telling more than how he supposes himself to have succeeded"; but this is true only in part. There is no mystery about successful artistic creation save the fundamental mystery of the method by means of which the imagination, as Professor Lathrop puts it, "subdues the most various and most incongruous materials to a single though complicated order." The rest is but a matter of the sure functioning of cold reason—a mere business of selection, rejection, and presentment. The solvent power of imagination is the secret of genius; it will enable an Emily Brontë to triumph over all her faults of craftsmanship, and will lend an Olive Schreiner a power that sets at naught the shackles imposed by inexperience. But not for this reason have men of genius been so disregardful of craftsmanship when writing fiction. Rather has their craftsmanship been poor, because the novel as a form of art has been regarded in this country with a tolerance only just removed from contempt. Little more than a hundred years ago, Sir Walter Scott concealed his authorship of 'Waverley,' because, in the words of Minto, "he considered the writing of novels beneath the dignity of a grave clerk of the Court of Session." Men who have not the profoundest respect, and a love approaching adoration for their art, are not likely to dig down to first principles and discipline their material to perfect order and beauty.

THE CITY OF GOD.

The Political Aspects of St. Augustine's 'City of God.' By John Neville Figgis. Longmans. 7s. 6d. net.

WHOEVER would master the thought of the Middle Ages must know the works of two men above all, of St. Augustine, and of Aristotle in the mediæval translations, and of these St. Augustine's influence is the earliest in time, and perhaps the greatest in range of penetration. His writings were widely read,

and more widely quoted; up to the middle of the thirteenth century they were supreme in mediæval theology and in every sphere of thought which theology controlled. He himself stands at the parting of the ways between the old world of Pagan Rome and the new world of Christianity, learned in all that the first had to teach, teaching the second the way in which its future lay.

Among his writings none is more widely read, none has been more deeply and continuously studied than 'The City of God.' Written at intervals after the sack of Rome by Alaric, it is an apology for Christianity against the praise of the old faith; the first five books attacking the pagan gods as givers of earthly happiness, the second five showing that their worship does not bring eternal life. The next twelve books trace the origin, the history, and the consummation in eternity of the 'Civitas Dei' and the 'Civitas Terrena.' It is this study which has brought to Augustine the fame of being the first author of a philosophy of history, of being a leader of political theory.

The book before us consists of the six Pringle-Stewart lectures delivered by Dr. Figgis at Oxford in 1918, and now published after his death as his last completed piece of work. The central interest of the lectures is the relation of Church and State; what was St. Augustine's theory concerning it, and what teaching was deduced from his work by succeeding ages, mediæval or modern? In his own days Church and State had no relationship to each other, many of the subjects of the State were outside the Church, and not all the Church were members of the State. Centuries later came the day when Church and State were co-terminous, and it was the aim of many to make them coalesce. Then came the Reformation, the splitting up of Christendom, and the need for new theories as to the relationship between the two spiritual and temporal rules.

We shall not, in the limited space at our disposal, attempt to follow the course of Dr. Figgis's admirable commentary on St. Augustine's great work. Suffice it to say that, while all his exposition is clear and masterly, the chapter on the 'De Civitate Dei' in the Middle Ages is far and away the best thing that has been written on the subject, and the most distinguished in the book. The subject is one that concerns everyone who is interested in the future of the English Church, and feels any reliance on the wisdom of those who have gone before us.

Deeply we regret that Dr. Figgis did not live to give us more of his various and always interesting work. One of the most original of the Cambridge historians, he was a worthy follower of Acton, Maitland, and Creighton, different minds, indeed, but Figgis was a man of remarkable versatility. When he left his cure of Marnhull for the dedicated life of the Mirfield community, he rose rapidly to a leading position in that order. His gifts were quite unusual, and such as do not often in these days belong to churchmen. He could lecture on Nietzsche and Mr. Bernard Shaw as well as historians and theologians. He was deeply read in English literature, and had a wonderful memory for poetry. He had that breadth of view and knowledge which is conspicuously lacking in the prize student in a particular subject. His religious writings had a success unusual among modern contributions to theology. He was a man of warm affections and many friends, and preached with acceptance both to High Church and Low Church, receiving, of course, a little tribute of suspicion from both as to his sincerity. At the time of his death he was engaged on a book about Bossuet. His end was hastened by the shocks of war—his ship was torpedoed off the Irish Coast as he was going to the United States to lecture—and by the strain which always falls on a man who can do many things and do them all well. One of the most distinguished intellects in the Church, he should have been made a Canon or a Dean, with leisure to write, deserving such honours far more than some promoted schoolmaster. In such a place his vivid and somewhat restless temperament would have found repose, and he would have added much to the effectual history and

theology of to-day. For he combined subtlety with an admirable humanity. He was never dull, and the oddity of fortune which deprived him of the harbour of a college fellowship, perhaps served him well in the end. He came out of the backwater of Cambridge into the world, and influenced it widely with his voice and pen.

HENRY JAMES.

Roderick Hudson. By Henry James. Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.

THE long-announced "complete edition" of Henry James's novels and stories has at last begun to appear, and its first volume is 'Roderick Hudson.' This is one of its author's few romances which have so far enjoyed the compliment of inclusion in a popular "sevenpenny" library. The only other to be so distinguished is, we believe, 'The American.' Written in 1874-5, when the author was in his thirty-first year, 'Roderick Hudson' was also his first attempt at a novel, a long fiction with a "complicated" subject; and in a preface to it written by him about fifteen years ago, and here reprinted, he recalls the uplifted sense with which, thirty years before, his idea had permitted him to "put out quite to sea." Up to then he had but "hugged the shore on sundry small occasions: bumping about to acquire skill in the shallow waters and sandy coves of the short story, and master as yet of no vessel to carry a sail." He confides to us, further, that in indicating the small New England village of which Cecilie, the Hudsons, Mary Garland and Mr. Striker were among the residents as Northampton, in Massachusetts, he was "nestling technically in the great shadow of Balzac." With equal candour he confesses that his presentation of the local social organism of that village fall so far short of what his model had done with small towns in France that he might more wisely have left this part of his scene just a peaceful rural New England community *quelconque*, and not troubled to identify it with Northampton, Mass.

One of the first features, however, of the present volume which readers will observe is the contrast between the style of the 1906 preface and that of the 1874-5 novel itself. The one is in the highly elaborate manner of the writer's latest phase, the other in a prose as limpid as Thackeray's at its best. And here we may mention a piquant expectation which the edition has happily falsified. In May last year, Mr. Edmund Gosse, writing in the *London Mercury*, told a most diverting story of a talk he had with Henry James at Lamb House, Rye, at a time when his host had lately re-written this very novel in his latest style for inclusion in the definite and collective edition which was to begin to appear in New York a year or two later. Mr. Gosse disapproved of this proceeding, and when, one evening, Henry James put into his hands "the revised copy, darkened and swelled with MS. alterations," he faithfully exclaimed against it. This was after dinner as they sat alone in the garden-room. Henry James's countenance darkened. However, after declaring that "the only alternative would be to put the vile thing behind the fire and have done with it," the conversation passed to other topics, and presently the two gentlemen parted for the night in apparently unruffled cheerfulness. Next morning, however, at breakfast the host was so sombre and taciturn, and so heavy a veil of gloom lay across his frowning features that at length Mr. Gosse anxiously inquired whether he had slept well. Then down came the Jacobean outburst! "Slept? Was I likely to sleep when my brain was tortured with all the cruel and—to put it plainly to you—monstrous insinuations which you had brought forward against my proper, my necessary, my absolutely inevitable corrections of the disgraceful and disreputable style of 'Roderick Hudson'!" Little wonder that Mr. Gosse withered under such a blast, and inwardly decided never again to raise the question.

Yet, in all homage to Henry James, we cannot but feel that in this Mr. Gosse was in the right. His instinct, his conviction that such a tampering with the

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text of an early work would have broken up the whole vision of Henry James's artistic development was absolutely just. Indeed, the baffling thing to us is that, of all men, Henry James did not perceive this. What would he have said of a version of 'Love's Labour's Lost' improved by its author in his more mature days with the touches of humanity and dramatic effect of which practice had made him so supreme a master? Should we not have lost much by the disappearance of the wonderful piece of young *bravura* which the comedy is, just as it stands? The question surely answers itself; and the case is the same—though in a far minor degree—with 'Roderick Hudson.' Frankly, we doubt if what Henry James would have put into it would in any way have improved it. In a greater degree than many of his later romances it is a story of action in the ordinary sense of the word. A great deal happens. The scene changes frequently. Not Massachusetts only, but Italy and Switzerland are generously drawn upon. The characters are sharply defined and dramatically contrasted. Motives as well as deeds, moreover, find equal expression. The play of mind and character and temperament is never allowed to sleep. We have compared pretty carefully the present edition of the tale with the earlier, and are glad—for many reasons—to find their texts identical.

So the book makes a brilliant start of the new "set." This, we gather (with an added qualification) from a signed Note which precedes the Preface, is under the supervision of Mr. Percy Lubbock. It will not, we may remark, be literally complete. The short story, 'Covering End,' and the two long ones, 'The Other House' and 'The Outcry,' for example, are to be omitted. We shall miss Mr. Prodmore, the unpleasant pompous gentleman in the first-named of these. How diverting is a glimpse of him as he stands among the ancestral portraits of the old country mansion!

"He was a personage of great presence and weight, with a large smooth face in which a small sharp meaning was planted like a single pin in the tight red toilet cushion of a guest-chamber. He wore a blue frock coat and a stiff white waistcoat and a high white hat that he kept on his head with a kind of protesting cock, while in his buttonhole nestled a bold prize plant on which he occasionally lowered a proprietary eye that seemed to remind it of its being born to a public career."

However, there is so much to be grateful for that we need not dwell on omissions. Those readers of fiction who can appreciate manner as well as matter will find in these books a rare enjoyment. The list of the coming volumes appears at the end of this one. Certain masterpieces, of course, stand out—'The Altar of the Dead,' 'The Turn of the Screw,' 'The Beast in the Jungle,' 'The Death of the Lion' (will its immortal comic Mr. Morrow), 'Madame de Mauves,' 'The Ambassadors,' and others; but over them all are generously shed not only the verbal felicities, but also the poetic fancy, the deep analysis, the wit and irony and elegance and passionate power of one of the finest intellects that ever devoted itself to the delineation or delighting of mankind.

There have been many signs during the last few years of the widening of the circle of Henry James's admiring readers. Compared, no doubt, with the orb of the late Mr. Garvice or that of the living Miss Dell, it is still small, but it has a thousand properties which the others lack. His books, for example, are not only read, but re-read, not only borrowed but bought, not only bought but preserved. It is the rarest thing in the world to discover a Henry James in a second-hand bookshop. His volumes do not find their way into those last refuges of the dispossessed.

SONGS OF SYON.

The Hymn-Book of the Church. By Frances Arnold-Forster. S.P.C.K. 8s.

MISS ARNOLD-FORSTER begins a very useful hand-book to the Psalter on a rather revolutionary note, somewhat surprising in an S.P.C.K. publication.

"If need be," she remarks, "we must have the courage and faith and humility to give up, at the call of Truth, traditional and dear beliefs." She speaks of "cruel and vengeful words" in certain psalms and "un-Christlike prayers," which mar their tender beauty. It is true that before 1914 "our ignorance of war-time conditions and feelings made not a few of the Psalms seem altogether remote from our experience," whereas during the war "the Psalms had all at once become alive to us quiet English church-goers; there we found a picture of the ordeal through which our own world was passing. The cruelty, the anguish, the sudden flight before the pitiless invader, such ills had been faced once and again by a courageous little nation." Sacred sanctuaries dishonoured and destroyed, fear on every side, the dead lying unburied in their streets, women and children carried into exile, or shut up in prison—such spectacles before our eyes made us desire to wash our footsteps in the blood of the ungodly, and wish to see their habitations desolate, their wives widowed, and hot burning coals fall upon them. However, such impulses ought to have been "instantly crushed." We fancy this lady takes insufficient account of the theocratic attitude of mind natural to the Israelite of old, whose vengeful enemies were the enemies of Jehovah, bent on making the covenant-nation to be no more a people, and their name to be blotted out.

The attribution of David's name to the whole collected Psalter was a literary convention, no more inexplicable than the constitutional phrase, used for centuries in England, which spoke of legislation long posterior to the Confessor as the Laws of St. Edward. King David, that "sweet singer," seems to have founded a school of liturgical music to accompany—as the headings of many psalms in the Authorized Version show—the sacred hymnody of Israel. The very word "psalm," as distinguished from "hymn," implies a psalter—as "lyric" implies a lyre—and is applied in the Hebrew Psalter to only fifty-seven pieces out of the whole number. Scholars believe that musical editions of the Psalter were made for synagogue use, the sacrificial worship of the Temple requiring a more elaborate apparatus. But some (e.g., the 96th) were Temple psalms. The fifteen lovely Songs of Degrees, or of Ascent (120—134), were almost certainly sung by joyous companies of pilgrims who year by year travelled to Jerusalem and climbed the Hill of Zion. Other parts of the collection are national songs or threnodies, and some are clearly personal. But the "I" of certain Psalms, when a ruler speaks to God, is representative, not individual. The "Annotated Psalter" brings out unmistakably the great influence upon the entire book of the Poet-King David.

Hebrew poetry depends upon rhythm rather than metre, and the rhythmic movement of sacred dances gave form to the songs of those who took part in them. The long acrostic or alphabet psalms (e.g., the 119th) were constructed in this way for mnemonic purposes. Nothing can be more alien from the spirit of such poetic rhythms than the wooden double Anglican chant, dear to modern eleven o'clock congregations: the plain-song is far more elastic. The Psalter was not compiled by Tate and Brady, nor yet by Dr. Stainer. It is universally noticed that the Prayer Book, or Coverdale's, version, is a great deal more musical and easy to sing than either the Authorised or the Revised. Nor usually do these, albeit more verbally accurate, make the sense clearer to the average worshipper. "The fierceness of them"—but "them" is a misprint, dating from 1541, for "other"—"shalt thou refrain" is more intelligible than "the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (A.V.) or (R.V.) "the residue of wrath shalt thou gird upon thee," though this corresponds to the Vulgate. "Hot burning coals" is a simple expression, but what are "coals of juniper"? "The trees of the Lord are full of sap" (P.B. and A.V.) is clearer than "the trees of the Lord are satisfied"; "He knoweth whereof we are made" than "He knoweth our frame." As regards noble picturesqueness and freedom of translation there is no comparison—e.g., "the twinkling of an eye" instead of "a moment,"

"marvellous worthy" (not, as printed till lately, "marvellous, worthy") "to be praised" instead of "greatly to be praised." By the bye, the old English word "grin," meaning a trap, has been altered by the printers to "gin" in two places of A.V.—"they have set gins for me," "the gins of the workers of iniquity."

Miss Arnold Forster says:—"In many respects the Psalms seem to us to spring from a race of spiritual giants; yet it is no less true that they spring from a time of spiritual childhood; when the Chosen People was still fighting its way to higher things without the measure of protection, wherewith the proud patriotism and the separatist spirit of the later Judaism was afterwards to hedge round its beliefs and stiffen its faith. And the stress of this effort to keep themselves untouched by the surrounding evils often shows itself in the fierce intolerance of the most pious-minded of the nation for those who tempted them to lower levels. But then, is *tolerance* the first and highest of virtues? Or is it not noted as a mark of the thoroughly bad man that 'he abhorreth not evil?'"

The object of this volume is to give in popular form the results of the labour of many students, and it is well fulfilled. We notice a trifling slip. The interesting form of the Englished Apostles' Creed in which the correct phrase "resurrection of the flesh" appears is found in all the baptismal services of the Prayer Book, not only in the Baptism of Adults, but also in the Visitation of the Sick.

MUSIC NOTES

CRITICISM AND GOSSIP.—The value of anonymity in journalism is questioned in these days, and, where musical criticism is concerned, it has almost ceased to exist. We seem to read as much about the writers themselves—their tastes, habits, and idiosyncrasies—as about the art and events upon which they are supposed to discourse. Far be it from us to quarrel with their methods, so long as their readers (and their editors) are satisfied. They are doubtless justified in their confident belief that they are superior in every way to their predecessors of the Victorian age. They do not wish to disguise the fact; they are thankful that they represent a different type of man—and thinker. Their habits of life and thought have changed. Among other things they have adopted the custom of studying the nature and psychology of audiences. It is no longer enough to judge the music; we have to read a close and subtle analysis of its precise effect upon those who listen to it. Different audiences are impressed in different ways, and this makes the study of the varieties of effect an interesting process. Hence are we being told that the enjoyment—i.e., the sensuous experiences—of those who listen with understanding to performances of chamber music is akin to the sensations of people under the influence of "dope." (Indeed, the Dutch-American word is now freely employed to illustrate this novel condition.) For our part, we do not agree with Mr. Arnold Bennett in this idea, though he may be forgiven for preferring the "alertness" of a Palladium audience, just as some of us preferred the "liveliness" of a Monday Pop audience in the old days. But is music actually falling to this degraded level? It is not an intellectual stimulant, but merely a sedative, or a tick-me-up for laded nerves? If so, the belief goes far to explain the eagerness of certain sections of society to saturate their ears and brains with the musical novelties of the advanced school. But the writers who deal with such influences and come into contact with their ministering agents might perhaps take greater care than they do to avoid infection, and the danger of encouraging a wrong habit. As we declared last week, music is just now at the parting of the ways, and it is therefore imperative that those to whom the public looks for guidance should help their readers to obtain a clear perspective, a more just appreciation of whither they are tending. One imagines that they would be satisfied with a little less gossip about individuals and individual opinions of a sensational order. Who cares a rap for these random utterances and clever *mots* that excite so much attention in certain musical columns? The need of the moment is for sane and serious criticism, to encourage only what is good, what is beautiful, what is noble, in the art that has long eluded us, but wherein, if signs may be believed, we are once more coming into our own.

MR. MORITZ ROSENTHAL.—An opportunity far more favourable than his brief appearance at the Quinlan Concert was vouchsafed by Mr. Rosenthal when he gave a full afternoon of solo pieces at Queen's Hall last week. His supreme executive powers were then in complete evidence, and we felt that we were listening to one of the world's really great pianists. He is still prone to over-sentimentalise in moments of tenderness, to overdo the force of his hammer-strokes in those of passion; and yet we can forgive both extremes because of the masterfulness and grandeur of it all. His interpretation of Beethoven has more real depth of feeling, a truer poetic sense, than of old. His playing of Schumann's 'Carnaval' was as rich in contrast and vivid touches of romance as the music itself. He does with Liszt what no other living pianist save Busoni has the secret of achieving. Finally, his Chopin is a perfect realisation, alike in

mechanical detail and expressive charm, of the countless beauties of the music. No one else can conceal their difficulties with such consummate ease, and no one but Pachman can unfold their delicate loveliness with an equal grace. It used to be customary to speak of Mr. Rosenthal as an "intellectual," a psychologist of the pianoforte. That may be no less true of him now; but as he himself says, "In these later years I have learned a great deal," and it is our opinion that he was never so great an artist as he is to-day.

CONCERTS AND RECITALS.—London is just waking up to the fact that in the *ci-devant* doublebass player, M. Kaussevit-ski, it is entertaining a conductor of altogether exceptional qualities. He has been proving it for several Sundays past at the Albert Hall, and last week at Queen's Hall he demonstrated his special gifts before a still more exacting public. Together with a wonderful amount of precision and rhythmical energy, he obtains the most delicate pianissimos—degrees of softness so gradual and impalpable that the phrase dies away into silence. Moreover, his effects are all arrived at without effort or display, and with a sureness of aim that never misses its mark. To accomplish feats like this a conductor must be constantly working with the same orchestra—a privilege not enjoyed, for instance, by native conductors such as Mr. Adrian Boult and Mr. Julius Harrison, who were both directing concerts, one at Kingsway, the other at Westminster, on Saturday afternoon. Both did remarkably well in the circumstances, especially Mr. Harrison, who escaped for 48 hours from his duties in Glasgow to conduct half a dozen items at the Enoch concert. The vocal recitals of the week do not call for notice, but two pianists, Mr. Backer Grondahl and Mr. York Bowen, deserve fuller recognition than we have space to grant them. A third, Mr. Leff-Ponishnoff, who is credited with a highly successful début, we shall have a chance of hearing later in the month.

MAGAZINES

THE FORTNIGHTLY's literary and social articles are prominent this month. Mr. Clayton, discussing 'The Cinema and its Censor,' has some very severe and well-founded criticisms on the baser films dumped on the public after they have been used up in America. He has also to remark on the absurd position in which Mr. T. P. O'Connor finds himself as Censor, and of the still more absurd results of his "conciliatory and reasonable" attitude. Mr. Wilcox gives a most illuminating account of 'Dostoyevski as seen by his Daughter,' in which the great man is shown as scenting himself with eau de Cologne before sitting down to write. There are some interesting identifications of the principal characters in his novels. Mr. Huntly Carter has been investigating 'The German Theatre in War-time and After,' and finds it almost free from commercial despotism—the theatrical trusts which govern Paris and London. Play-going has increased, and there is a wider variety and a higher standard of plays, while the classics are everywhere performed. Mr. Moulton compares the poets of our own time with Keats, and enlarges on the envy which the pessimist of to-day must feel for the optimist of a century ago. Mr. Julius Price describes the pictorial richness of the Hermitage at Petrograd, and gives us just a little information as to its present position. Sir Thomas Barclay's reminiscences of Bethmann-Hollweg are interesting. Captain Usher's 'Monthly Commentary' deals with the crisis of unemployment.

THE LONDON MERCURY verse this month consists of half-a-dozen poems by Mr. Blunden which have the indispensable and unwonted merit (for a modern poet) of scanning. Dr. Ethel Smyth describes 'Berlin and the Kaiser: Twenty Years ago' with her usual power over words—we wish we liked her music nearly as much as we do her writing. 'The Way Home' degenerates into a burlesque of Mr. Belloc at his beeriest and breeziest, when it should have been contented to remain a parody; we liked the note of it, but thought it forced. Mr. Harwood's study of 'Mark Rutherford' was, we suppose, necessary to bring him to the notice of new readers, and Mr. John Freeman's portrait of Cobbett serves the same purpose, besides being a piece of good writing itself. Mr. Pollard's 'The Need of Bibliography' shows how that minor art and science can react on the serious study of literature and history. It is written with the skill, facility and knowledge of the subject which distinguishes Mr. Pollard.

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among writers on the matter. Prince Mirski's Russian Letter deals with the Russian poetry of the last half-century and the German Letter of Hermann Bahr with Austrian History, and the impossibility of any Austrian buying a book. The 'Chronicles' of literature and art by Messrs. Hannay, Squire, Shanks, Freeman, Hewlett and others are satisfactory without being striking. The reviewer of 'The Pilgrim of a Smile,' while recounting its literary parentage, should not have neglected to trace the compact of the four friends to a similar scene in Adrian Hayter's 'Profitable Imbroglia.'

BLACKWOOD has the first chapters of a new story, 'The Voyage Home' by Alan Graham; a continuation of Mr. Walter Harris's reminiscences of Raisuli, most interesting and valuable; and more 'Vignettes' of Irish life by Miss MacMahon, whose skill in catching the mind of the peasant is quite remarkable. Col. Butler has some terrible stories of the experiences of refugees from Russia in the Bosphorus; Mr. Lamb continues 'On Hazardous Service'; and Major Bashford gives an excellent account of his journey from Memel to Libau, throwing much light on the state of affairs in that part of the world. Mr. Williams tells the story of Rachel, and Capt. Black describes a visit to some rebellious Ningtos in the N.E. frontier of India. A very lively and well-assorted number.

CORNHILL begins a new Russian story 'The Provocator' by Captain Blennerhassett, placed in the St. Petersburg of 1904. The short stories are 'The Wade Monument,' by Violet Jacob, a daylight ghost story, and 'The Word of an Englishman,' by Mr. J. H. Vabey. Mr. Basevi suggests in 'Below the Wedge' that we are getting in the lower class of the population a segregation of the pre-Aryan section of European inhabitants who are incapable of benefiting by modern civilisation. Mr. Seton Gordon has a good natural history article on Hebridean birds, and Sir Edward Clarke revives the memory of a mysterious sea story. Mr. Forman's note on the residence of Keats during his short stay at Winchester raises a point of local interest.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW ranges from a very just tribute to M. Delcassé as 'The Man who prepared Victory,' to an article on 'Goats' by Lady Bathurst, and another on living under 'Altered Circumstances' by Lady Hope. Mr. Stretfield exposes the wrongs wrought under the name of religion and the anger it keeps alive, while Miss McKane discourses most alluringly on 'Badminton for Beginners,' and Dr. Gilruth protests against some statements reflecting on his conduct at Port Darwin.

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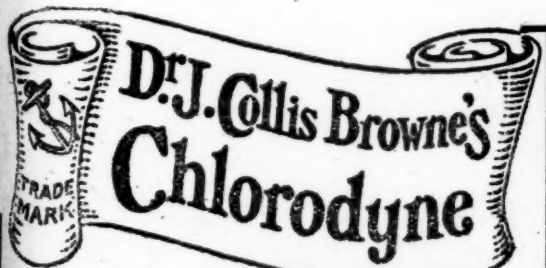
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SPORT

FRANCE'S establishment of a Sports Ministry is an innovation England might well copy. This is not the time to multiply ministries, but a Sports Minister could with advantage supplant the Minister for Health. In their schemes for the welfare of the country, the Government have paid no attention to the value of games. The appointment of high-salaried medical inspectors, the erection of large quantities of houses, or the card-indexing of the medical history of every person in the State, will do nothing to improve that State's efficiency. Health is the first essential of efficiency, and that can best be obtained by recreation. The Education Authorities should also give this matter more attention than they do.

Hendren celebrated his birthday last week at Melbourne by making a score of 271. How we wish his birthday had fallen during one of the Tests! Colonel Douglas compiled a canny 112 not out, but without these two the M.C.C. team would have cut a sorry figure. The trouble with this eleven throughout the season has been that they have never all, or nearly all, been on their form at the same time. A has made a century on one occasion, B on another, C and D on others; but never A, B, C and D together. Probably the absence of Armstrong from the Victorian side made a great difference. This exclusion has caused much indignation in Australia, but we must say that we agree with the selectors' action. Anyway, he has been reinstated, and is now playing in the fourth Test Match.

League Football is now narrowing down to an exciting close. Tottenham Hotspurs are easy favourites for the cup, and Chelsea and Burnley are also well in the running. Burnley, indeed, have this week established a record in the history of the League, by remaining unbeaten for twenty-three consecutive matches. There is, however, a dark horse whose chances we fancy; and that is Cardiff City. The final is to be played upon the Chelsea ground and it will be satisfactory if a London team are playing. It will also be satisfactory for the promoters, and we hope they will take adequate precautions for dealing with an enormous crowd.

Scotland's victory over Wales at Swansea last Saturday broke a long spell, for it was the first time a Scottish Rugby team had won on Welsh soil for 29 years. The match was an example of the folly of making big changes in a team in the middle of the season. The Scottish team was beaten by France, but their selectors had the courage of their convictions, and fielded practically the same team against Wales. The Welsh selection committee, on the other hand, perturbed by the Twickenham defeat, made wholesale alterations. The result was a failure. It was madness to bring back a player so old as Vile. The behaviour of the crowd was lamentable, but the fault lay rather with the Welsh Rugby Union, who failed to make any adequate provision for a large crowd. We recently had reason to complain of the arrangements at Twickenham, but they were good compared to the chaos at Swansea.

The English Selection Committee have also stuck to their guns; but they had no temptation to desert them. Identically the same English team will—bar accidents—oppose Ireland to-day as that which overcame Wales five weeks ago. We have little to go upon in forming an estimate of the Irish fifteen, but that one has been collected at all from that unhappy country is to us a matter for some surprise! At all events, the result is not in doubt, and we hope the English team will not obtain too runaway a victory. If they play throughout as they played for the first twenty minutes against Wales, they are almost certain to win with plenty to spare, especially as they have the Twickenham tradition behind them. The position of Ireland this season is unfortunately far from rosy, while England seems to have no one to fear, with the possible exception of France. But you never can tell.

The Royal Air Force has an enterprising Rugby team, but the outsiders are weak at present. Last Saturday, therefore, after Mr. Mylne had been carried off the field and Captain Wakefield had come out of the pack to fill the gap in the three-quarter line, the Navy had the game well in hand, winning by 35 points to 3. Commander Davies and Mr. Kershaw, the England halves, evidently relished their exercise gallop. The former was at the top of his form, dodging, feinting, and finding touch with delightful skill. The three-quarters were inspired by him, notably Mr. Evan-Thomas on the left wing. He used to play at full-back, but has now found his true place, where his speed and strength tell. With a little more swerve, he would be formidable indeed, but he was twice tackled from behind, before he burst through with a fine try. The Air Force forwards, as always, shoved valiantly, and never spared themselves in the loose.

Perhaps rather too much has been said of the judgment with which the Spring Handicaps have been compiled. Certainly the acceptances are good, for it must be remembered that owners are apt to remove their horses for other reasons besides a consideration that the weight is too high. That is, of course, always the case. The withdrawal of 23 out of the 77 entered for the Lincolnshire Handicap is not, however, evidence of extraordinary success. Just a quarter of the 48 in the City and Suburban go out, and the disappearance of only 7 of the 69 in the Kempton Park Jubilee is remarkably good. The disquisitions about the chances of the horses left in are valueless for the reason that at the present time several at least of the trainers concerned cannot know whether it will be possible for them to get their charges ready. The downs at some training quarters are so heavy that fast work must be delayed for an indefinite time, until conditions improve. One of these places is Wantage, where Mr. J. B. Joel's Corn Sack is being prepared. Good judges are of opinion that this horse would have an excellent chance for the Lincolnshire Handicap, if thoroughly fit on the day. Whether he can be made fit appears doubtful; but if not ready by the 16th March, he might be so for the City and Suburban, which he won last year. That is set for the 20th April.

Of the 92 nominated for the Grand National, 20 go out, and in the circumstances that is an acceptance better than the average. Only 17 owners have indeed taken out their horses, for two of the others have died since the weights were published. The trouble with regard to this race is that a dangerously large field is anticipated, for that means almost inevitable falls, and a number of the loose horses who are always responsible for mischief. Having got rid of their riders, horses usually gallop to the next fence, sometimes jumping it to continue to interfere, sometimes swerving into their neighbours with disastrous results. The safest of jumpers, when left to themselves, are as likely to be knocked down as others who have seemed to have little hope of what is called "getting the course." Of late years the fences have been considerably stiffer than they were at an earlier period. In 1911, for instance, when some mishap befell 25 of the 26 starters, too much was demanded of them. It is desirable that the Grand National should remain the severest test to which a steeplechaser can be subjected; but there are limits.

"Celui qui parie jamais, gagne toujours." The excellence of this French maxim is emphasized from time to time on the turf by the collapse of a favourite, which, mysteriously anticipated by a few persons who have exceptional intelligence, or are able to get it, comes as a shock to the general public. The disappearance of Always from the Grand National is such a shock, and has probably put a lot of money into the pockets of the book-makers. He was well in the front among the best fancied horses before he sprained an off-fore tendon.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK

ESSAYS AND BELLES-LETTRES.

Cecil Rhodes. By Basil Williams. Constable: 15s. net.
 Essays. By William Ernest Henley. Macmillan: 12s. net.
 Idea of Coventry Patmore, The. By Osbert Burdett. Milford:
 7s. 6d. net.
 Shakespearian Discipleship. By Thomas Dunlop. Edinburgh:
 Andrew Elliot: 6s. net.

HISTORY.

History of the Jews in Russia and Poland. Vol. III. By S.
 M. Dubnow. Jewish Publication Society of America.
 Leeward Islands, The. By C. S. S. Higham. Cambridge Uni-
 versity Press: 20s. net.
 One Hundred Years of Singapore. Two vols. Edited by Walter
 Makepiece, Dr. G. E. Brooke, and R. St. J. Braddell.
 Murray: 42s. net.

SOCIOLOGY.

British War Finance. By T. J. Kiernan. King: 5s. net.
 Gateways of Commerce, The. By J. Fairgrieve and E. Young.
 Philip: 3s. 6d. net.
 Manual for Health Visitors. By Mrs. E. Eve. Bale: 10s. 6d.
 net.
 Modern Irish Trade and Industry. By E. J. Riordan. Methuen:
 7s. 6d. net.
 New Japanese Peril, The. By Sidney Osborne. Allen & Unwin:
 10s. 6d. net.
 Principles and Methods of Industrial Education. By William H.
 Dooley. Harrap: 6s. net.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENCE.

Instinct in Man. By James Drever. (Second Edition). Cam-
 bridge University Press: 10s. 6d. net.
 Law of Mind in Action, The. By Fenwick Holmes. Routledge:
 4s. 6d. net.
 Perspective as Applied to Pictures. By Rex V. Cole. Seeley
 Service: 18s. net.
 Psyche's Lamp. By Robert Briffault. Allen & Unwin: 12s. 6d.
 net.
 Rational Good, The. By L. T. Hobhouse. Allen & Unwin:
 8s. 6d. net.
 Scientific Papers. By Bertram Hopkinson. Cambridge Uni-
 versity Press: 63s. net.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Christian Revolution. By E. Burney. Melrose: 5s. net.
 Hamlet and the Scottish Succession. By Lilian Winstanley.
 Cambridge University Press: 10s. net.
 Why do we Die? By T. Bodley Smith. Fisher Unwin: 6s. net.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS.

BOOKS.

BOOKS RARE AND OUT OF PRINT.—Barrie's *Quality Street*, Edit. De Luxe, illus. by Hugh Thomson, 30s.; *Carmen*, illus. by René Bull, Edit. De Luxe, 30s.; *Rupert Brookes' John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama*, 7s. 6d.; *Boccaccio's Decameron*, coloured plates, large paper, 25s.; *Doré Gallery*, 12s.; *Caw's Scottish Painting, Past and Present*, 21s.; *Warner's Imperial Cricket*, £2 5s. 0d.; *Beardsley Early and Later Works*, 2 vols., £2 10s. 0d.; *Bell's Shakespeare*, 1785, illustrated, 12 12 vols., calf, 35s.; *Hoppe's Studies from the Russian Ballet*, 15 beautiful Studies, 6s., pub. 21s.; *Thornton's Americanisms*; *An American Glossary*, 2 vols., 7s. 6d., pub. 30s.; *1912*; *Thackeray's Works*, 28 vols., Caxton Pub. Co., £4 4s.; *Story of the Nations*, 65 vols., fine set, £10 10s.; *19 Early Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley*, only 150 done, 35s.; *Aubrey Beardsley*, by Arthur Symons, large paper copy, 1905, £2 2s.—Send also for Catalogue, 100,000 bargains on hand. If you want a book, and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me. Send e a list of books you will exchange for others. EDWARD BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP, 14-16, John Bright Street, Birmingham.

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THE CITY

THE tardy announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the dropping of the Excess Profits Duty has induced a little more confidence in financial and industrial circles. If the statement had been made several months ago, it would have done more good than is possible now. The golden eggs having begun to fall off, it is hoped that by removing the cause of the dearth, matters will improve. E.P.D. is no longer a paying proposition. In the long run, it never was, because it ultimately destroyed what it fattened upon, namely, enterprise and thrift. The increase in the rate last year was part of the Government's programme of deflation and policy of pander to the Labour party. What it has cost both the Government and Labour is already painfully evident. Dear money and E.P.D. have brought the trade and industry of the country to the verge of insolvency. It now remains to re-establish what has been destroyed. One useful step in that direction has been made. The next is to reduce the Bank Rate.

A first effect of Mr. Chamberlain's Birmingham speech was a rally all round the Stock Exchange. This gave rise to renewed hopes of a general recovery, but markets have since relapsed into their old rut, where they seem likely to remain until cheaper money comes along to give things a fillip. However, interest has been stimulated in a few individual counters famous for their huge E.P.D. payments in past years. Some notable examples are Imperial Tobacco, Courtauld, Burmah Oil, British American Tobacco, Associated Portland Cement, and De Trey, together with some of the Insurance Companies. It is estimated that British American Tobacco has paid in duty not less than £3,000,000 during the last three years, and the fact that the profit of Imperial Tobacco at £6,659,800 last year was nearly double that of 1916 will afford some idea of the company's liability for E.P.D. The amount allocated last year for duty was £1,300,000. In the case of Courtauld a pre-war profit of less than £500,000 contrasts with £2,280,860 on account of 1919. Among Insurance Companies some heavy contributors to E.P.D. have been Liverpool and Globe with £1,125,000, Commercial Union with £678,389, and Royal Exchange with £380,000.

It is no exaggeration to say that in the proposed cancellation of war debt as outlined by Mr. Chamberlain, lies the remedy for nine-tenths of the financial and industrial disability under which the entire world is labouring to-day. The original suggestion is that the United States should cancel the amount of European indebtedness to that country on the understanding that we, together with France, should write off the amount of our loans to the other allied countries. Subsequently the more concrete proposal was that we would remit some £1,700,000,000 due to us, provided America cancelled the £800,000,000 due from us. The project should not be regarded either as Utopian, or idealistic. It is in reality the soundest and most businesslike proposition that could possibly be broached at the present time. Very little imagination is necessary to realize the immense benefit present and future which a settlement on these lines would confer on all concerned. America, above all, has most to gain by such an agreement. The trade of that country has suffered more from the exchange barrier than any other; and it is difficult to see how any improvement can set in until the exchange becomes more normal. The cancellation of war debt would probably bring about the adjustment of the international exchanges without which commercial intercourse must continue to be stifled. Let us hope the proposal will not fall to the ground through any petty political reason or narrow-minded prejudice.

Notwithstanding the lengthy speech recently delivered by the Premier, there is still considerable doubt whether the £11,300,000,000 due from Germany can

be paid without doing more harm than good to the recipients. Obviously it cannot be paid in gold, and if payment is made in goods, these will compete with the products of our own manufacturers. Already we have had an object-lesson in the slump in our ship-building industry which followed upon the allocation of merchant tonnage surrendered by Germany. It would seem from Mr. Lloyd George's statement, however, that the Allies have not overlooked this aspect of the matter. The proposed 12½% duty on all German exports is quite a sound scheme, which will give protection to our workers in all neutral markets. But unless any goods received in payment are distributed free to the necessitous poor, we fail to see how a check to the consumption of British products can be avoided.

The result of the Australian Commonwealth 6% Loan of £5,000,000 is hardly up to expectations. The underwriters have been left with more than one-half the issue, or, to be exact 57.5%. The amount of public applications is said to be about £2,150,000.

Numerous new industrial issues are understood to be in the offing, awaiting more propitious conditions before making their début. But capital is very shy at present, preferring the safe seclusion of bank deposits to the stormy waters of industrial enterprise. Next week will, however, see the issue of 8% convertible debenture stock at 95 by the Leeds Forge Company for the acquisition of Bristol Wagon and Carriage Works.

Holders of French 5% Rentes of 1915 are anxiously awaiting a statement as to what will happen when the remaining coupon due on Wednesday next has been cashed. The bonds will then become bad delivery on the Stock Exchange, and presumably the French Government will issue new bonds with fresh coupon sheets. The questions that arise are whether the holders will have to pay for the English stamp on the new bonds, or whether they will be allowed to "swear off" the stamp, and get a substituted security. Most important of all is the question whether the new bonds will bear the stamp "souscription Anglaise," in the absence of which they would be merely worth as much as the bonds of the French issue, that is some six or seven points less than the English issue. It is to be hoped that the Bank of England will clear up the uncertainty at an early date.

Heavy liquidation from the North has had a very depressing effect on the Oil Share Market. It is understood that some of the Scottish Banks have been turning out pawned stock, since it became evident that the Chancellor's E.P.D. statement was not going to set the market ablaze. It is advisable to draw a distinction between the share slump and conditions in the oil industry. The former is due solely to present financial conditions, and can have little bearing on the reduction in the price of crude oil. Although it is impossible to put a period to the present depression, there is no gainsaying the fact that the big shares have already fallen to levels which promise a high dividend yield.

American buying of Mexican bonds has lifted prices several points. A good impression has been created by the statement that the Mexican Government has invited a representative of Messrs. J. P. Morgan & Co., to visit Mexico to confer with the Government, and it is hoped that the announcement of a definite scheme for funding the arrears on the debt will be made in due course. These arrears amount to approximately £15,000,000, while the total of the debt listed in London is about £55,000,000. It is a relatively small sum for a country with such valuable natural resources, and as confidence is felt in the personnel of the present administration, Mexican loans appear worth holding, though they are by no means free from speculative risk.

At a meeting this week of the principal creditors of Straker-Squires, the company was described as in a

state of "provisional liquidation." A special manager has been appointed by the Court in the person of Sir Arthur Whinney, whose observation that, "What the Company really wants is a moratorium," might be given a very much wider application in the present state of industrial finance. Estimating the value of the company's stocks at £400,000, consisting of raw materials and chassis, finished and unfinished, a net surplus of assets over liabilities was shown amounting to about £25,000. Apparently this valuation only holds good, provided the company remains a going concern. Failing this, Sir Arthur Whinney appeared to think that in the event of a compulsory sale of assets the unsecured creditors might get 6s. 8d. in the £. The alternative suggested was that £100,000 be raised in the form of First Debentures, and that trade creditors and noteholders should be given second mortgage debentures. It was finally agreed that the business should continue until a definite scheme was formulated. A committee was appointed consisting of Mr. Oliver Sunderland representing various creditors, and Mr. Harris for the Slough Trading Company, to confer with Sir Arthur Whinney and the directors.

The terms upon which the Governments of Malaya have been asked to intervene with help for rubber plantations over the present crisis are interesting. Legislation is asked for to impose a 50% reduction in output to be effective for the 6 months to June 30th next. Any mature estate seeking financial help from the Government will have to cease production entirely for 6 months, and set aside 50% of its profits, as they accrue, for repayment of the loan. The provision is made for assisting young plantations under 2½ years old. Other countries producing plantation rubber are to be approached with a view to adopting similar measures.

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SOUTH METROPOLITAN GAS COMPANY

THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the proprietors of the South Metropolitan Gas Company was held on the 9th inst. at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C.

Dr. Charles Carpenter (the chairman) presided, and in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said: Ladies and Gentlemen,—This, the twenty-fourth time I have had the honour to preside over these meetings, will be the first of the annual ones it is in future proposed to hold. Whatever doubts may have been felt as to the desirability of the longer interval have been removed as the result of the experience of the last twelvemonth. In pre-war days the half-yearly meetings were generally pleasant functions, not differing seriously one from another, nor in the statements made from the Chair. When we look back upon those times we not only realise how heavy and anxious are the responsibilities which post-war conditions have placed upon us, but we see that a survey extending over the whole of 1920 gives a truer picture than would be obtained by the juxtaposition of its two halves, the first opening promisingly and the second closing disappointingly.

In framing our post-war policy as to the financial basis upon which we should endeavour to reconstruct our undertaking we had the choice of two alternatives. The obvious one was to amend our sliding scale by the application thereto of a higher standard price for gas. This, you will remember, was the course, purely a war-time expedient, which we adopted in 1917 when we joined with most other gas companies in an endeavour to obtain some relief from Parliament of the unjust working of the scale. The proposal, which was a perfectly simple measure of relief, was viewed with disfavour, and was finally set aside for the arbitrary regulation which has since and until last year authorised the payment of our meagre dividend.

We were therefore not predisposed to rely a second time upon joint action with the industry, fearing that as it had proved unable to obtain a fair measure of justice in 1918 it might equally fail in 1920. But there was a still more important factor to be considered. It did not appear that any future relief that could be granted *en bloc* would go further than a restoration of the pre-war position, and a feeling had long been gathering strength among your Board that the remuneration of gas capital had been outdistanced by the altered circumstances of its investment and the changed conditions under which it had to compete for business. Those fears turned out to be well grounded.

I would draw your special attention to the fact that the Gas Regulations Act passed at the instance of the Board of Trade was expressly framed with the object of reconstituting the pre-war position and nothing further. We therefore, as you are aware, decided to cut ourselves adrift from the impediments of the sliding scale, and a year ago asked and obtained your consent to the promotion of a Bill aiming at the re-establishment of the economic basis of the undertaking upon a sounder foundation than the old one had proved itself to be. With one exception Parliament adopted *in toto* our proposals. They were exceedingly simple ones. They were founded upon experience which had proved that the state of things to be taken into consideration in 1920 was not comparable with that prevailing in 1875, when the sliding scale was initiated. A third partner had been taken into that partnership between consumer and shareholder, the identification of the interest between whom was the object of the earlier legislation. Moreover, competition of the keenest possible character had come to the rescue of the gas undertakings and lifted them up from the reproachful status of mere monopolies to that of organisations conducted on a business footing in common with other industries, and, like them, susceptible to the stimulus of competition in ensuring a high order of business enterprise and management.

Now, our Act of last Session identifies the interests of consumer, capitalist, and employee. For the first named, the consumer, it fixes in his interest a fair or "basic" price (using the words of the Act) for his commodity, in this case, gas. For the second, the capitalist, it fixes a fair rate for the use of his money; not, mark you, limiting any further profits capital is encouraged to seek by the exploration of all avenues for economical working, for the extension of business, or arising out of the state of the markets in respect of raw material or of bye-products. But by the adoption of the principle indicated, capital secures a living wage to which it is entitled under all vicissitudes just as labour is entitled to its living wage under precisely similar conditions.

Now what will happen if and when profits accumulate beyond what is absorbed in providing the consumer with gas at the fair or basic price, capital with its fair remuneration for its use, and labour with its fair wages for its services? Three-fourths of such surplus profit will be allocated to the consumer by way of reduction in the price charged for gas, and the remainder divided equally between capital and labour—that is to say, between the shareholder and the employee.

All three parties to this tripartite partnership are thus secured, in the one case a fair price, in each of the other two cases a fair return. These latter are, therefore, provided with a stimulus to do their best for the undertaking by the knowledge that while three-fourths of the result—the lion's share, in fact—goes to the consumer, they may reasonably look forward to a substantial portion for themselves.

Now it is very important that you should not imagine that this is going to take place forthwith. As a matter of fact the future is extremely uncertain and no one knows what is going to happen

in relation either to our raw material, coal, or to our bye-products, coke, ammonia, etc., during the next twelvemonth or so. We have got to proceed very warily, remembering that our primary duty to-day is to do nothing which is likely to injure in any way a business which is at present in an extremely healthy condition.

We want to do all we can to keep down the price of gas to something like its present figure and not to alarm the consumer and risk permanently damaging our relations with him by even temporarily raising our price to get over our near future difficulties so long as we can possibly avoid it. Prices are at the moment far from stabilised; we must be patient and wait with prudence, knowing that if we are not sharing profits on the scale to which we are entitled with justice, we are at least getting paid at the basic rate for the use of our money until better times come.

In connection with this you will remember that in promoting our Bill we expected to get 6 per cent. on all our ordinary stock. Parliament, however, divided old stock from new in this respect, and while allowing 6 per cent. on future issues fixed 5 per cent. for the present stock. It was a disappointment, but after all recognition of the new principle goes a long way to compensate existing shareholders for the limitation to the lower figure. These rates have become a cardinal feature of our new charter and will remain undisturbed even though the unexpected course of events may impel us to seek in due course a revision of the present figure now constituting a fair or basic price for gas. In future, therefore, your 5 per cent., or 6 per cent., as the case may be, will be assured under all circumstances, and what you will receive in addition thereto will vary according as trading conditions fluctuate.

Turning now to the accounts we find ourselves confronted with some very striking figures. Our expenditure is now over £5,000,000 per annum, of which salaries and wages account for over two millions, and coal for another two and one-third millions, of which probably two-thirds is also for labour. Our gas and fittings rental only provides us with three and a third millions to meet this, and we should not have balanced expenditure with income had it not been for the remarkable buoyancy of residuals. The high-water mark of these has passed, and a strong ebb set in, the extent of which it is impossible to forecast. Unfortunately the miners' strike ruined for this season our export trade in coke, on which we largely rely for our ability to meet our heavy coal bill. Apart from the burden on the consumer and the loss of revenue to the country, the cost and loss due to stacking coke amounts to a very large sum, and the money locked up in these stocks could be put to better use.

We regard with satisfaction the coming decontrol of the mining industry. Our coal supply has never been of worse quality than during the period its production and distribution has been under Government control, and furnishes one more example of the invariable result with which most people have become acquainted during the last few years, namely, that the more completely an industry is in Government hands the less efficient does it become. ("Hear, hear"). In such matters the country's interests become nobody's interests, with results of a kind to which the Report refers, while the public suffers and pays. With the coal supplies again in private hands we shall be able to exercise some influence for the improvement of its quality. In one important respect, however, it is to be hoped an invaluable lesson has been taught us by the War. Before 1914 much of our best coking coal went abroad that should have been retained in this country for conversion into bye-products. We can carry out this conversion every bit as well as the Germans, who would then have to purchase from us such products as they required and we could spare, while we should retain the profit on working, the advantage of more employment, and increased production of liquid fuel and tar products.

Our business not only continues to increase, but its basis broadens, and developments for industrial uses grow in a variety of directions. The proposals of the Fuel Research Board are now fairly widely known and understood. They were based upon the simple and equitable principle of giving value for money whatever quality of gas it was desired to supply. A statement made recently may be taken as an example of the unfairness of the old system. It was reported that we charged the same price for gas during 15 months as a neighbouring undertaking. This was the truth, but not the whole truth, for the statement omitted to mention the fact that the heating value of this Company's gas was about 15 per cent. greater than the other, though the charge per volume was the same.

It is satisfactory to note that the new basis of charge has met with widespread approval, and this is all the more satisfactory when it is remembered that the proposal was cordially supported by this company from its earliest stages.

Mr. Frank H. Jones (the deputy chairman) seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried, and the dividends, as proposed, were formally declared.

After the transaction of formal business, an extraordinary general meeting was held, at which a resolution was passed approving the Company's Bill to be promoted in the forthcoming session of Parliament to amend the capital powers of the company and for other purposes. The Chairman explained that the Bill, if approved, would enable the capital authorised under the Acts of 1916 and 1918 to be placed on a permanent basis.

A vote of thanks was passed to the staff, and acknowledged by Mr. F. McLeod (general manager).

After a vote of thanks had been accorded to the chairman and directors the proceedings terminated.